

Erap to name Angara as executive secretary

STORY
ON PAGE A2

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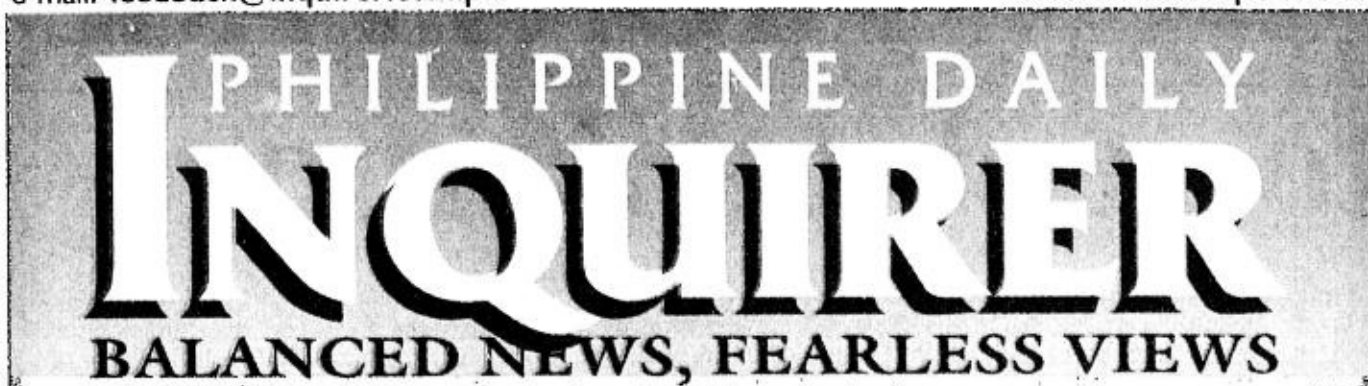
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Lawyers want Mendoza disbarred

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC, DONNA CUETO
AND ROCKY NAZARENO

THREE groups of lawyers will file a petition to disbar lawyer Estelito Mendoza for his alleged involvement in an attempt to cover up President Estrada's ownership of a P500-million trust account in Equitable PCI Bank.

LAWYERS/ A18



FRIDAY, JANUARY 5, 2001

★ 46 PAGES

4 SECTIONS

VOL. 16

NO. 28

P15

Binay, top cops face raps for grilling boy

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

THE 11-YEAR-OLD boy interrogated by the Makati police in connection with the Dec. 30 bombings was severely affected by his ordeal and is now in the care of relatives in the province.

His father, police Director Diony Ventura, BINAY/ A6

Go fears for life, bank



HUMAN drama disrupts the impeachment court as Senator-Judge Miriam Santiago accuses spectators Dante Jimenez, Bettina Aboitiz and Rosanna Tuazon-Fores (standing) of looking at her in a "provocative way."

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Equitable still OK, says Buenaventura

GEORGE L. Go, former Equitable PCI Bank chair, yesterday said he feared for his safety and the future of the bank after it became embroiled in the Senate impeachment trial of President Estrada.

In an interview with Reuters at an undisclosed place in Manila, Go said he had been in hiding for about a month now and admitted there had been a run on the bank "to some degree."

In a statement to the INQUIRER, however, Go clarified that only about P3.2 billion had been withdrawn from the bank by depositors since the impeachment trial began last month—not P32 billion as reported by Reuters.

"Equitable PCI Bank is solid and stable enough, and we are all confident that it will weather the storm," Go, who resigned as the bank's chair last month, said in his statement.

Even so, he told Reuters that the

bank is "not over the hump."

"It will not recover overnight," said Go, whose family controls a 30-percent stake in the bank, the third largest in the country.

He admitted that he had lost a lot of friends, but did not say if one of them was President Estrada.

Wilfredo Vergara, Equitable PCI Bank president, confirmed the bank had lost only about P3.2 billion in deposits. But Vergara added he didn't think Go was in hiding.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura also said Equitable PCI Bank did not seem to be in trouble.

"So far, they have managed... I guess they have been using their



Miriam goes ballistic; 3 spectators expelled

GMA cameraman 'surprised' witness

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL,
ROCKY NAZARENO
AND JULIET L. JAVELLANA

IT WAS a day of many disruptions. First, the proceedings of the Senate impeachment court were suspended for more than an hour yesterday after Senator-Judge Miriam Defensor-Santiago blew her top and accused three spectators of disrupting the trial.

Santiago demanded that the three people in the gallery be expelled and cited for contempt for going "out of their way to stand out of their seats... just to look at me in a provocative way."

The senator-judges, after a closed-door meeting, ordered that anti-crime advocate Dante Jimenez and two sons of wealthy families, Bettina Aboitiz and Rosanna Tuazon-Fores, be banned from attending the trial.

Hours after the three were booted out, a GMA 7 microphone was ordered confiscated for allegedly capturing off-microphone conversations of senator-judges from their respective seats.

Aboitiz is a barangay councilor in Forbes Park, Makati, while Tuazon-Fores is a first cousin of Mike Tuazon Arroyo, husband of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and is married to the son of Dr. Raul Fores, personal physician of former President Fidel V. Ramos.

At the trial, the court condemned death threats received by some of the 22 senator-judges.

"The impeachment court issues a statement condemning threats against the lives and security of judges wherever they come from and any attempt to pressure them to vote one way or the other in the impeachment trial."

Santiago complained that the three had violated a regulation asking those in the gallery to

MIRIAM/ A18

Impeach court 'violated right to due process'

THE INTEGRATED Bar of the Philippines yesterday deplored as "unconstitutional" the disciplinary action that the Senate impeachment court meted out to three spectators in the gallery whom Senator-Judge Miriam Defensor-Santiago accused of "looking at her in a provocative way."

The impeachment court barred from attending its hearings anti-crime advocate Dante Jimenez and sons of wealthy families Bettina Aboitiz and Rosanna Tuazon-Fores.

"It is to be deeply deplored that the Senate has apparently taken disciplinary action without benefit of any trial against the persons concerned," IBP national president Arthur D. Lim said.

"Our senator-judges should not be overly sensitive to public scrutiny or even criticisms," Lim said in a statement.

Jimenez, Aboitiz and Fores lamented that they were denied due process when their side was not taken before the impeachment court

IMPEACH/ A18

Where are the President's men?

BY DONNA S. CUETO

IT has become a lonely planet for President Estrada.

When he set out yesterday on yet another visit to the poor—his first main official activity for the year 2001—the usual coterie of Cabinet members was nowhere in sight.

Only one ranking member of his official family, Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara, was with him when he arrived in Caloocan City.

The three other officials present were Social Welfare Undersecretary Fe Villareal, chair of the National Anti-Poverty Commission; Agriculture Undersecretary Domingo Panganiban, concurrent chair of the National Food Authority; and Assistant Interior Secretary Reynaldo Jaylo.

Villareal represented Social Welfare Secretary Dulce Saguissag, who had been scheduled to be with the President but who flew yesterday to the United States for a medical checkup.

WHERE/ A18



'Why do they just randomly arrest Muslims?'

BY VOLT CONTRERAS,
JEROME ANING AND TJ BURGONIO

"THEY just pick up Muslims like goats any time they want. That's why we always live in fear," said Mohamad Djarry, 46, who witnessed a pre-dawn raid yesterday in Barangay Culiati in Quezon City, where military intelligence agents arrested 17 Muslim men for the bloody Saturday bombings in Metro Manila.

Residents of Culiati, a poor community, minced no words as they expressed outrage over

WHY/ A6

Military agents raid Muslim community in QC; 17 arrested

BY TJ BURGONIO,
PHILIP C. TUBEZA
AND DAVE M. VERIDIANO

IN THE dead of night, the intelligence agents, dressed in black uniforms, swooped down on the rundown wooden two-story house at No. 113 Cotabato St. in Barangay Culiati, a poor Muslim community in Quezon City.

"We were awakened by a loud thud downstairs. I was about to open the door in our room but those men in black

came rushing in, and with guns trained on us, told us 'dapa, dapa.' Then they ordered all the men out," a still stunned Sarah Edgel told the INQUIRER hours later.

Her husband Akas Edgel, 30, was one of 17 men detained in yesterday's pre-dawn raid in relation to a series of deadly bomb attacks that rocked Metro Manila Saturday.

Most of the men, aged between 18 and 33, work as janitors, factory workers, construction workers and security

guards—and they are all Muslims, a fact that yesterday sparked off a wave of protest that swept from Manila to Marawi. (See related story.)

Members of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) claimed that they seized two long firearms and a hand grenade during the raid.

But wives of the detained men said that the agents planted the weapons after the families were herded out of their rooms.

MILITARY/ A6

Prosecution, lawyers did not do homework

BY RAUL J. PALABRICA

THE PROSECUTION was unprepared at yesterday's hearing, and the defense was quick to take advantage of that inadequacy. The prosecution's performance may be described, if it were a course in law school, as "How not to conduct a direct examination."

ANALYSIS

The first witness, lawyer Ma. Jasmin Banal, was supposed to testify on the links of two dummy corporations she helped organize to the "jueteng" collections allegedly undertaken by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson for President Estrada.

Until Banal finished her testimony, no information was elicited from her to accomplish the purpose for which she was placed on the witness stand. Her testimony turned out to be a brief discourse on how junior lawyers in law offices are made to sign as incorporators for the corporations of their clients.

Banal's admission on cross-examination that the services she performed on the corporations is routine or common fare for law offices engaged in corporate work practically erased whatever value her testimony may have initially contributed to the prosecution's cause.

The prosecution was unable to link the two

PROSECUTION/ A18



Second FRONT PAGE

Angara to replace Zamora

By ARMAND N. NOCUM

PRESIDENT Estrada has picked Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara to be his new executive secretary, replacing Ronaldo Zamora.

INQUIRER sources said that Angara had already made preparations for an oath-taking before the President on Saturday morning at the Palace.

Three Palace officials confirmed reports that Angara, in anticipation of the ceremony, had asked about 250 to 300 people to attend the turnover rite.

The sources asked not to be named so as not to be accused of jumping the gun on the President, who is expected to announce his appointment of Angara today or tomorrow.

The sources said Angara agreed to be the next executive secretary after the President gave him his word that Agriculture Undersecretary Domingo F. Panganiban would be named as

Angara's successor.

They said his loyalty to the President and the additional asset of being a lawyer earned Angara the post.

"The President found him to be a logical choice. For a President who is not a lawyer, you need an executive secretary who is a lawyer," the source said of Angara, the founder of the ACCRA law office.

The source said that the President had also developed a "certain level of rapport" with Angara who ran as the President's running mate under the LAMP coalition in the last election.

The source also noted that Angara had opted to stick with beleaguered Mr. Estrada despite the decision of former Senate president Franklin Drilon, who belonged to Angara's Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, to bolt the coalition.

"Angara even managed to keep LDP's support to the President intact," he said.

A middle-level Palace official said that the President also appreciated Angara's successful implementation of the food security program.

"Most of the President's men who were consulted regarding the merit of Angara's appointment gave their nod of approval," the source said.

Other contenders for the post were outgoing Ambassador to the United States Ernesto Maceda and Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno.

The officials said Maceda was not inclined to take the post, while Diokno was deemed to be indispensable in budget department.

"The President does not want to change the budget (programs and policies) at this time when there is this serious financial crisis," a source said.

The sources said Diokno would treat those attending the oath-taking to lunch.

Those said to have been invited are Angara's family, Cabinet men, Angara's fraternity mates at the Sigma Rho, LDP men and members of Congress.

Angara has served as agriculture secretary for a year and a half.

Cebu trader denies he is Eleuterio Tan

By JHUNNEX NAPALLACAN, MALOU APALISOK AND CONNIE FERNANDEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—"I'm not Eleuterio Tan."

Cebu businessman Victor Jose Tan Uy made this assertion yesterday amid allegations that he was one of the three persons who withdrew P130 million in tobacco excise tax kickback allegedly for President Estrada.

Tan Uy, or Jojo Uy to his friends, said he did not know an Eleuterio Tan. He added that he had instructed his lawyer to file charges against the "Eleuterio Tan" who used his photo and personality.

"This Tan used my ID (identification card), that's why I'm surprised. I will file a case against this man, or whoever used my ID," he said over radio station dyLA here yesterday.

The photo on the ID shown in national newspapers yesterday looked "90 percent" like him, Tan Uy said. If it was his picture, he added "it may have fallen into the wrong hands."

Tan Uy said he was willing to appear in the impeachment trial to clear his name.

He said he did not know Delia Rajas and Alma Alfaro and had never withdrawn any amount from any Land Bank of the Philippines branch.

"I am not even familiar with the tobacco excise taxes," the businessman said in Cebuano.

Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson had tagged Tan, Rajas and Alfaro as those who withdrew the P130 million from LandBank in 1998.

The money, he said, was President Estrada's "share" of the P200-million tobacco excise tax proceeds released to his province.

On Dec. 22, Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. presented documents identifying Tan as Victor Jose Tan Uy.

Two identification cards were presented: one was given to the LandBank and the other was a driver's license, with Uy's name.

Pimentel had pointed out that the address of Eleuterio Tan was the same as that of Victor Jose Tan Uy at 2041 M.J. Cuenco Ave., Cebu City.

The address is that of the incorporator of Power Management Consultancy Inc. It is also the address of Uy Masuy Wine Factory, a wine manufacturing business owned by Tan Uy.

A barangay councilman of Mabolo, Cebu City, had earlier confirmed that the address was where Tan Uy and his family lived.

Power Management Consultancy was earlier identified as the company that employed Rajas and Alfaro.

Tan Uy admitted putting up Power Management Consultancy "with some friends" whom he did not identify.

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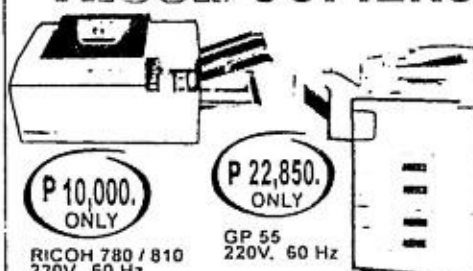


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As we sincerely sympathize with all those who have lost a loved one or who, one way or the other, have suffered as a result of this terrible incident, we would also like to inform all concerned that the LRTA has provided for a Passenger Accident Insurance/Liability with the GSIS for all passengers of the LRT Line 1 System.

In this connection, relatives of victims of this tragic incident who, up to this moment, have not yet been reached by LRTA representatives to provide the much needed assistance, are requested to get in touch immediately with:

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We would also like to take this opportunity to appeal to our people for sobriety and calmness amidst all these adversities. Rest assured that we are doing our very best to ensure the continued safety of the thousands of our passengers who take the LRT to their various places of destination daily.

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Senate bugging to be confirmed

By J. JAVELLANA

A SURPRISE witness is willing to testify that the police did conduct a telephone surveillance of senator-judges and others involved in the impeachment trial of President Estrada, and he is a police officer himself.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said yesterday the police officer could testify in open court today or at the next hearing.

"I just told the (impeachment) court that there is a police officer who is willing to testify that there was such bugging of (the phones of) senator-judges. I cannot reveal to you his name until it is brought out in court," Pimentel said after a two-hour closed door hearing on the alleged surveillance which the INQUIRER revealed last month.

The INQUIRER report said the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force was monitoring the telephone calls of some 100 persons, including the senator-judges and the House prosecutors involved in the impeachment trial of the President at the Senate.

President Estrada is being tried for bribery, graft and corruption, betrayal of the public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution in connection with gambling and tobacco tax kickbacks, among other things.

Pimentel said the police officer was not a member of PAOCTF. "He got in touch with somebody who got in touch with me."

The closed-door hearings on the alleged surveillance by the impeachment court turned comic yesterday when Lt. Col. Dioscoro Reyes, chief of the PAOCTF technical support division, finally revealed what the closely guarded secret surveillance equipment of the task force was.

Namfrel wants Fr. Bernas to be next Comelec chair

By JEROME ANING

THE ELECTION watchdog National Movement for Free Elections wants Jesuit priest and noted constitutionalist Fr. Joaquin Bernas to be the next chair of the Commission on Elections.

This came as Comelec chair Harriet Demetriou announced yesterday she would not be contesting a Supreme Court ruling which stated that her term of office was to expire on Feb. 7, 2001.

At a weekly forum at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Namfrel chair Jose Concepcion told reporters the organization wanted Father Bernas to head the commission, saying he was "a man of integrity, a person respected by the commissioners and could orchestrate a meaningful and clean elections."

Concepcion added: "He believes that democracy must follow the process provided by the Constitution. He is independent, non-partisan and objective. The entire bureaucracy will rally behind him."

But the Namfrel chair conceded that the possibility of Bernas, a member of the 1987 Constitutional Commission, assuming the Comelec chair in the future was dim.

"We told him we wanted him to stay for at least six months if he wants, but he said that even if he wanted to serve in the Comelec, his superiors—from the father provincial to the secretary general of the Jesuit order—might not permit him since the Holy See frowns on the practice of priests taking political positions," Concepcion added.

Concepcion and Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal were to meet President Estrada in Malacañang yesterday afternoon to present a list of nominees for the seats that are to be vacated by Comelec Chair Harriet Demetriou and commissioners Julio Desamito and Teresita Dy-Llaco Flores.

Aside from Bernas, others being considered by the Namfrel for the vacant seats are Comelec executive director Resurreccion Borra, Sandiganbayan Chair Jaime Garchitoren, Guillermo Carague, Luis Sison and Ambassador Ike Syquia.

In the same forum, Demetriou told reporters that unlike Desamito, she would not be contesting the Supreme Court's ruling on the expiration of her term. She said she wants to be spared from the "avalanche of protests" that would surely erupt from the wrong perception that she wanted to stick to her post.

"We are not indispensable... I'm sure the President will be able to fill up our positions," she said. "There are many who are capable, even more capable than me."

Demetriou said she was preparing for a

Poll donations not for personal gain—Demetriou

CAMPAIGN donations received even after the election period must be reported to the Commission on Elections, according to Chair Harriet Demetriou.

In the weekly media forum at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Manila, Demetriou reminded candidates that the Omnibus Election Code gave them 30 days after the election to file their statements of election expenses.

She added that under the law, campaign contributions were legal only if they were exclusively used for election purposes. They were not to be used for personal gain, she said.

During the impeachment trial of President Estrada last Tuesday, Senator-judge Miriam Defensor Santiago suggested to prosecution witness Clarissa Ocampo that the P500 million in the controversial Jose Velarde account, said to be owned by the President, came from the flood of contributions received by Mr. Estrada after it became apparent that he had won the 1998 elections.

"What is important is that (the contributed money) was meant for the elections," Demetriou said. "Why would you give something (to a candidate) beyond the election period?"

She lamented, however, that the Comelec "usually has no way of checking whether they (the candidates) will be truthful" in the filing of their statement of campaign finances.

Sometimes, she said, campaign money managed not reach the candidate because an unscrupulous campaign staff member appropriated the amount for himself.

Demetriou said the "normal cut-off" for contributions would be on the election day itself—May 14 this year.

Under the code, candidates other than those running for president and vice president are only allowed to spend a maximum of P3 per registered voter.

This translates to a little about P100 million, since there are about 35 million registered voters.

Demetriou said receiving contributions after the election day could be allowed in certain instances.

For example, she said, a candidate might accept the donation if it was pledged before the Election Day and only reached the candidate's hands after the Election Day.

A candidate might also accept contributions to help finance his activities in cases of election protests and other pre-proclamation legal proceedings.

Jerome Aning

Tito Silang of GSIS, 60

DEMOCRITO Silang of Batangas City passed away at 3:28 a.m. last Wednesday (Jan. 3) at his home in DBP Village II in Las Piñas, Rizal. He had just turned 60 last month.

Silang's remains lie in state at the DBP Village II chapel in Las Piñas. Interment is on Tuesday (Jan. 9) at the Eternal Garden in Batangas City.

Tito, as his family and friends called him, worked for

over 20 years at the Government Service Insurance System. In their neighborhood, he was known for his beautiful orchid garden.

Silang is survived by his wife, the former Ofelia Ilustre, a manager at the Development Bank of the Philippines, and their children, Omar, John Ryan (Jay-R), and Marcial Tito (Mark).

He was the brother-in-law of Jennie L. Ilustre, the Washington correspondent of the INQUIRER.

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ATENEIO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESQUERRA

THE SATURDAY bomb explosion on the LRT that cut short the life of 6-year-old Crizele Acusin is threatening to tear apart her once close-knit family as well.

Crizele's mother Angela, 36, may be finding it hard to accept her daughter's untimely death and may be blaming her younger brother, Sixto Dizon.

Dizon, 34, speaking from his hospital bed yesterday, said he was with Crizele and her brother Laurence, 11, when the bomb went off on the LRT train in Blumentritt, Manila.

Crizele suffered the full force of the explosion (her torn and bloodied body was in the front-page photo of the INQUIRER last Sunday). Laurence was released from the hospital after treatment.

"My sister hasn't visited me since I've been in the hospital. All our other relatives have visited me already. Perhaps she blames me for what happened to her only daughter," a teary-eyed Dizon told the INQUIRER.

"I know she's still nursing her wounds but I want her to be by my side. I was not at fault," he added.

Dizon lost his right leg in the explosion but it appears he fears the loss of his sister more.

"I just want her to know that nobody wanted this to happen. I feel very sorry for Crizele. I loved her so much. She was like a daughter to me," Dizon said, tears rushing down his face.

The INQUIRER waited at the Metropolitan Hospital yesterday after relatives had said that Angela was going to the hospital to visit her brother.

Two-and-a-half hours after visiting time was over, she still had not arrived and relatives were heard to say that she was still in shock over the incident and could not speak.

Dizon said he had stood as a surrogate parent to Crizele since the girl came to her maternal relatives' home in Metroville, Sta. Rosa, Laguna, several years ago.



CRIZELE ACUSIN

He said his sister Angela and her husband, PO3 Jaime Acusin, only got to visit their daughter on weekends since both work in Manila.

"I took very good care of her. I pressed her clothes. I tutored her a lot. I prepared her food. I loved her like my own daughter," Dizon said.

He said he used to help his sister at her fish stall in Malabon years ago, but he decided to stay in Laguna for good to take care of Crizele.

Dizon, Crizele, and Laurence boarded LRT Coach No. 1037 at the Gil Puyat station last Saturday afternoon. They were to attend the funeral of a relative before spending New Year's Eve at the Acusin home in Malabon for the first time.

Sweating commuters were heaped in the coach like sardines in a can, but the mood was festive, Dizon recalled.

"Everybody was 'texting.' Everybody was happy. That's why I never imagined that a bomb would explode. I thought this

only happens in the movies," he said.

Dizon and the children got to sit when several commuters alighted at the Tayuman station. It would be at the next station that they would meet with tragedy.

"At Blumentritt, the train was derailed by the explosion. There was total darkness and there was fire," Dizon said.

"When the lights went on, I saw Crizele had lost her face. Laurence was bloodied but I knew he was all right. I wanted to help them but I couldn't move. My legs were mangled," he said.

Moaning pervaded the hot afternoon air and he said he saw a middle-aged woman desperately trying to stand, to no avail. She had lost both of her legs, he recalled.

Another man lay motionless amid a pile of blood-soaked bodies, his exposed genitals turning violet and he couldn't speak, Dizon said.

Dizon was among the last to be rescued. He was taken to the nearby Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center but was later moved to the Metropolitan Hospital.

"He almost died because of extreme blood loss. Blood came rushing out of his severed leg and from shrapnel wounds all over his body," said Dr. Robert Tin.

The explosion ripped a hole in the right side of his body the size of a medium-sized fist. He had a much smaller wound in the left buttock and severe burns in the face and body.

"He's out of danger but his condition remains very serious. Infection is our deadliest enemy here," said Dr. Bienvenido Tan Jr.

Dizon appealed to the government to shoulder his hospital expenses. "We need financial help very badly at this point. I hope the government is listening," he said.

The People's Movement Against Poverty yesterday launched a fund drive for the victims of the five bomb explosions that rocked Metro Manila early Saturday afternoon.

"Whoever is behind the bombings is far more evil than the devil. He should realize what he has done. He has mercilessly killed many innocent people," Dizon said.

Blast victims return home in sealed coffins

TACLOBAN CITY—They went to Metro Manila to attend the wedding of a cousin and to do some pre-New Year shopping.

They came home in sealed coffins, victims of the Dec. 30 bombings that rocked Metro Manila and so far have claimed 18 lives.

Rowena Chua, 28, and her young niece, Eunice Canete, 4, died instantly after a bomb ripped through the LRT train they and two other relatives had mistakenly taken.

A member of a prominent Chinese-Filipino family in this city, Chua will be buried at the Chinese cemetery here today at 10:30 a.m.

Eunice was buried in the same cemetery Wednesday at 1 p.m. Her parents, Vicente Jr., Rowena's cousin, and Jennifer, were inconsolable because Eunice was their only child.

Rowena's younger sister, Rhodora, and cousin, Joanne Go, are still fighting for their lives at the Metropolitan Hospital in Binondo, Manila.

The four went to Manila on Dec. 26 to attend a cousin's wedding the following day.

Ricky Chua, younger brother of Rowena and Rhodora, said the four were going shopping at Robinson's Manila on Pedro Gil Street but they

got lost and took the LRT bound for Blumentritt instead.

This was a fatal mistake as a bomb placed near the door of Coach No. 1037 exploded as the train pulled into the station.

Rescuers found Rowena and Eunice with the lower halves of their bodies shattered. Rhodora also suffered second degree burns in her face. Her left shoulder was fractured and her left ear drum was shattered.

The Chua family is into merchandizing and owns Amon Trading, a big grocery in downtown Tacloban.

Eunice, according to her Uncle Ricky, was a bubbly, beautiful girl. She was a nursery pupil at the Sacred Heart School here.

Remedios Yagano, who works for the Chua family, told the INQUIRER that Rowena rarely went out.

"I always found her tending their store and she only went out to go to church with her sister Rhodora," Remedios said.

When the INQUIRER visited the Chuas' residence-cum-store along Torres Avenue here, family members were busy manning the store, but sadness and quiet enveloped the place. Cynthia A. Borqueta, PDI Visayas Bureau

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, January 5, 2001
Week Before Epiphany

1st Reading:

Gospel:

Jesus decided to set off for Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the one that Moses wrote about in the Law, and the prophets as well: he is Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

Nathanael replied, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." When Jesus saw Nathanael coming, he said to him, "Here comes an Israelite, a true one; there is nothing false in him." Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?" And Jesus said to him, "Before Philip called you, you were under the fig tree and I saw you."

Nathanael answered, "Master, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" But Jesus replied, "You believe because I said: 'I saw you under the fig tree.' But you will see greater things than that."

Truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opening and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

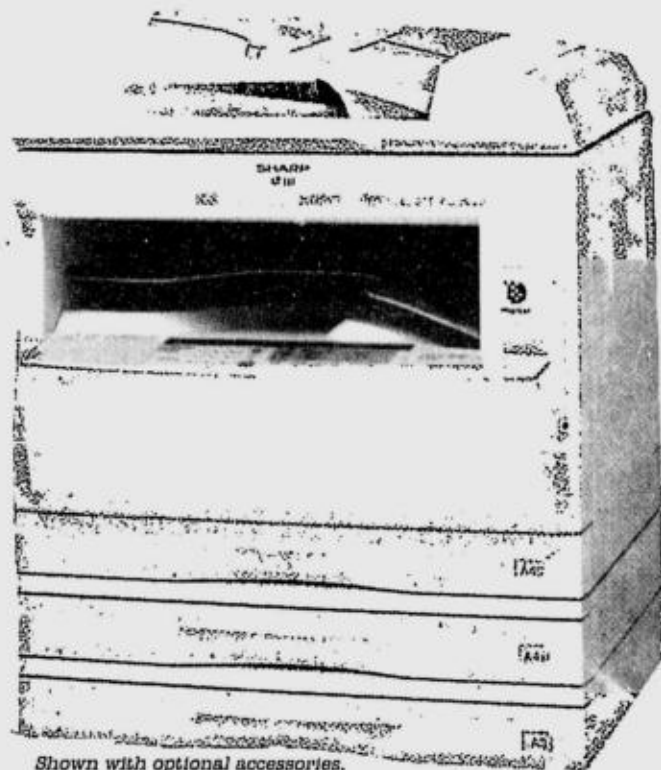
Commentary:

If you want to know whether you have truly encountered the Lord and believed in him, ask yourself this simple question: "Am I eager to tell other people about Jesus?" In Evangelii Nuntiandi, Pope Paul VI says, "it is unthinkable that a person should believe the word and surrender himself to the kingdom without becoming a person who bears witness to it and proclaims it in his turn." We see this exemplified in today's Gospel. Jesus had called Philip. Philip eagerly sought out Nathanael, and spoke to him about Jesus. Though Nathanael was not drawn at first Philip insisted saying, "Come and see." Some people, like Nathanael, are not easily drawn. Do not give up so easily on people. Often, the harder it is to get them, the more devoted to Jesus they become when finally convinced.

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Immigration to aliens: Pay up or be deported

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

PAY up or pack up.

More than 3,000 newly legalized aliens have been ordered by the Bureau of Immigration to pay their integration fees by Jan. 31 or face deportation.

Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez issued the ultimatum Wednesday, as he revealed that the total amount due from the aliens is around P300 million.

Rodriguez said that those who would be deported forfeit all fees already paid in favor of the government.

The 3,000 foreigners were among the 16,000 illegal aliens who applied for amnesty and were granted permanent residence status under Republic Act 7919, or the Alien Social Integration Act of 1995.

Under the law, which the BI implemented from

October 1995 to March 1997, aliens who entered the country before July 30, 1992 were allowed to apply for amnesty provided they paid the integration fee of P250,000 each.

The applicants were also charged of P50,000 for a spouse and P25,000 for each dependent.

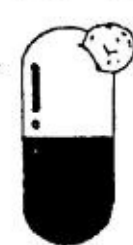
The law gave the applicants the option to pay the integration fees in full or in equal installments over three years.

Marcela Malaluan, acting BI executive director, said the 3,000 delinquent aliens still owe the government between P50,000 to P150,000 each.

She said the fees were due in March last year but the deadline was moved because the bureau had not yet finished reviewing the records of the applicants.

The review was ordered by Rodriguez in 1999 after it was alleged that many of the applicants did not qualify since they arrived in the country after July 30, 1992.

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Go fears for life, bank

(From page A1)

secondary reserves," Buenaventura said.

"They have not come to us for liquidity assistance but we are prepared to help if requested," he added.

At the same time, however, Buenaventura denied rumors that the central bank was pressuring Equitable PCI Bank to stop assisting the prosecution at the trial.

No regrets

For his part, Go said he had no regrets about the bank's decision to cooperate with the impeachment proceedings.

"We decided to give out certain information because it was hurting us," he said.

Asked if some clients were concerned about the disclosure of documents to the Senate court, Go said: "Yes, that is an issue among a lot of depositors."

Equitable PCI Bank has handed over to the Senate tribunal documents on a P500-million trust ac-

count under the name of a certain Jose Velarde.

Clarissa G. Ocampo, a senior vice president and trust officer of the bank, testified on Dec. 22 that she saw the President affix the signature "Jose Velarde" on documents relating to the trust account.

Manuel Curato, the bank's legal officer, corroborated Ocampo's testimony on Tuesday. He was with her in Malacatang on Feb. 4, 2000 when the President signed the documents.

The bank has also submitted documents on a P1.2-billion current and savings account from which the P500 million was drawn.

Also in the Senate court's possession are documents on a P142-million Jose Velarde check that was used to buy the so-called "Boracay mansion" for one of the President's mistresses.

According to prosecutors, the testimony of the two bank officers and the documents proved that the President acquired ill-gotten wealth to fund a lavish lifestyle for himself and his mistresses.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the bank had also submitted to the impeachment court documents relating to an alleged attempt to cover up the President's ownership of the P500-million trust account.

In her testimony, Ocampo said Go had instructed her last month to prepare the documents transferring the trust account to Dichaves.

The documents, according to her, were antedated to Feb. 4, 2000 and signed by Dichaves last Dec. 13 in the office of Estelito Mendoza, the President's defense lawyer.

Ocampo said the arrangement fell through because the principal alleged to be the President did not sign the letter-authority transferring the account to Dichaves.

On Wednesday, Ocampo and Go said in separate press statements that Equitable PCI Bank had no part in the attempted cover-up.

Take the stand

Their statements prompted Senator-judge Raul Roco to say that the two officials "protest too much."

Roco said the House prosecutors should call Go to the witness stand to shed light on the second set of documents that Dichaves signed.

"Go and the other bank managers have to explain why the documents were signed not in the bank but in the office of the counsel of the President. That cries for an explanation," Roco said.

Isabela Rep. Heherson Alvarez, however, was fully supportive of the bank, citing its cooperation in the impeachment proceedings.

"Withdrawal of patronage for Equitable PCI Bank will do the economy more harm than good. Instead, Equitable PCI Bank executives should be commended for coming out to shed light on the impeachment case," said Alvarez, who is also the Lakas-NUCD secretary general.

He said Filipino workers had a sizable contribution to Equitable PCI Bank's P254.8 billion in assets and P45.47 billion in capital.

"The Filipino worker may be affected by a bank boycott more than anyone else because he is in effect a shareholder of the bank through the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System," he said.

Both the SSS and GSIS have at least a 26-percent stake in Equitable PCI Bank. *Reports from Reuters and Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Pagcor lawyer takes stand, defends 2-Ball

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

THOUGH she was presented by the prosecution to corroborate the bribery charge against President Estrada, lawyer Emilia Padua testified that there was nothing irregular in the implementation of Bingo 2-Ball which was meant to replace "jueteng."

Padua, head of the entertainment and bingo division of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., testified that the consultancy fee of Bingo 2-Ball "architect" Charlie "Atong" Ang was reduced from 5 to 2 percent after the jueteng exposé of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Senator-judges pointed out that Ang operated Bingo 2-Ball for 20 days on a trial basis without any contract.

They also said that it was Ang who determined the basis for Pagcor's 23-percent share apart from collecting it.

But the defense was quick to control any damage by making Padua testify on the regularity of the Bingo 2-Ball.

Defense lawyer Raymond Fortun even jumped the gun on the prosecution by referring to certain documents which prosecutor Sergio Apostol said were meant for another witness.

On cross-examination, Padua said the operation of Bingo 2-Ball was cleared with the President and "conditionally approved" by the Pagcor board in a meeting on Nov. 14 last year.

"Yes, there is regularity of action (by

Pagcor) on this," said Padua, who evaluated the Bingo 2-Ball proposal by Charlie "Atong" Ang and recommended its approval to the board.

On Fortun's question, Padua stressed that no shortcuts were made in approving Bingo 2-Ball and that no pressures were exerted on the Pagcor board to implement it or hire Ang and his firm Prominent Marketing Consultant Group as consultant.

She said that after Ang submitted a letter-proposal on Sept. 1, 2000, she submitted two memoranda dated Sept. 5 and 11 as well as a recommendation for approving the game on Nov. 13.

Padua further testified on cross-examination that Ang turned over the full 23-percent Pagcor share of P24.4 million from the 20-day trial operation of Bingo 2-Ball.

Padua said that out of the 23-percent share, Ang was supposed to be paid 2 percent but this never happened because the game was suspended.

"They (Ang) never received a single cent," Padua said.

Instead, she said Ang lost the P3 million he spent in evaluating the operators and the sites. She said Ang also posted a P10-million bond, which was to take effect only after a contract was signed.

She said Ang also returned, in her presence, the P76-million "mobilization fee" paid by the so-called sales agents or operators.

Binay, top cops face...

(From page A1)

told reporters yesterday that the boy, Emil, was now having difficulty sleeping, and that the family had asked a psychiatrist to provide counseling.

Ventura's lawyer, Leonard de Vera, said he was preparing to file charges against the boy's interrogators, including Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Jejomar Binay and Senior Supt. Manuel Cagibon, director of the Southern Police District.

De Vera said the charges would be filed today at the earliest before the Office of the Ombudsman, the National Police Commission, the fiscal's office in Makati City and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

Binay admitted to reporters yesterday that he gave the boy P2,000 during the interrogation.

"I told the child that if he would tell the truth (about the bombings), I would give him P2,000. He accepted the money and he was very happy about it," Binay said at a news conference on garbage that he called in Makati.

According to Binay, the boy did provide information to police.

Binay could not give details beyond saying that the boy had told police about accepting P200 from a person he described as "pangit (ugly)," supposedly to place a bomb near the Dusit hotel at the corner of Pasay Road and Edsa.

"At that time, I did not know he was the son of General Ventura," Binay said.

De Vera said the Venturas were planning charges such as illegal arrest and detention; lack of probable cause; violation of the child's rights—specifically the fact that police did not call up his parents—and violation of other procedures, including the right of suspects to legal counsel.

Even Aglipay

Ventura said he was also thinking of filing charges against National Capital Region Police Director Edgar Aglipay, because he learned that the latter was with Binay during the interrogation.

Also among those to be charged are Dusit security guards Joel Orcajada and Benmar Datuon; Supt. Melchor Isulat and PO2 Ronaldo Digma of the Makati police; Supt. Wilbur Naldo of the SPD; Supt. Gaudencio Cordora Jr. of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group; and Supt. Ram Baralzo.

In a statement, the Philippine National Police said Director General Panfilo Lacson had ordered a "thorough review of police procedures when conducting interviews of persons in connection with ongoing investigations."

The PNP said the move was in connection with "an apparent misunderstanding involving" some members of the Makati police "who conducted interviews on" the boy.

"We understand the concern of Director Ventura regarding the experience of his son Emil. We are fathers ourselves," the PNP said.

It said Lacson's instructions included "the continuous education of all PNP personnel, to remind them of the standard procedures when interviewing persons who can shed light on ongoing investigations."

It made the assurance that "the PNP leadership will require the responsible personnel to answer the issues raised" by Ventura, "should it be proven that there were procedural lapses on their part."

CHR chair Aurora Recina yesterday ordered an investigation of the matter.

"We will look into the allegations that the rights of the boy were violated," Recina said in a statement issued through her executive assistant, Eman Moreno.

Just a boy

Ventura said Emil was just being a little boy when he answered his interrogators' questions.

Asked if he knew what a C4 explosive was, the boy gamely said yes as this was in a computer game he once played, Ventura said.

Asked whether he knew the two policemen who died while trying to defuse the bomb found outside the Dusit hotel, the boy said his father probably knew them.

Ventura pointed out that the boy must have responded in that manner because he knew his father was in the police service.

The explosion killed SPO4 Roberto Gutierrez and Insp. Nestor Salvador. The two were buried in simple rites at the Libingan ng mga Bayani at Fort Bonifacio yesterday morning.

Ventura said it was more out of fear that the boy replied positively to the "suggestive" questions posed by his interrogators.

Ventura said police were even able to squeeze out of the boy a sketch of his alleged accomplice in the planting of the bomb.

"Pinagkatuwaan siya (They had fun with him)," Ventura said. "He was too good to be true."

The boy, youngest of six children, was said to have confided to a sister that he was frightened, especially when his interrogators raised their voices.

Ventura said the interrogators had also been rough on the boy, and had clutched his upper left arm tightly.

Fall guy

According to Ventura, the boy's detention only showed that some people wanted to use him as a "fall guy" for the five bomb attacks that have so far killed 18 people.

Ventura lamented the fact that police interrogated Emil apparently upon learning that he is a son of a police general who used to be assigned with former President Fidel Ramos.

Ventura is on "floating status." He was previously PNP director for human resources and doctrine training.

Emil was held for questioning by Makati police and SPD officers for some 14 hours on Dec. 30.

He was arrested by a Dusit security guard right after the bomb went off. Father and son were reunited after midnight.

Ventura said he had learned that the boy was taken to some houses where his supposed accomplices might be taking shelter.

He said that by the time he and his worried wife were reunited with their son, the boy was famished.

Police mentality

Sen. Raul Roco condemned the police for detaining and interrogating the boy.

He said that had Emil not been Ventura's son, "who knows what would have happened to this child?"

"You see, the police are exhibiting a police mentality. They do not care if these are innocents, children, or women so long as they can pass the blame to somebody," Roco said at his weekly press conference.

The senator said that despite the huge intelligence funds of the PNP, its members were showing that they could only harass innocent people.

"The police are again exhibiting total disregard for rights, and we should condemn that kind of reaction. They can afford to take on the innocents, but the bombers they cannot find," he said.

He also said he saw in the incident shades of the 1995 killing of 11 suspected members of the Kuratong Baleleng bank robbery syndicate by a task force then headed by Lacson.

Roco was then chair of the Senate committee on justice and human rights, which looked into the killings.

"In the Kuratong Baleleng incident there was another kid, I think 16 years old, who was the gardener. He died with a number of bullet wounds, he just disappeared," Roco said, adding:

"It is fortunate that somebody discovered the whereabouts of the Ventura child."

Roco said those who detained Emil should be charged for violating his rights.

"In the first place, at a certain age, children are exempt from criminal liability. The police should know that. If they have no other basis than the fact that he was loitering or was present at the hotel, that is not sufficient ground (for detaining him)," Roco said. *With reports from Alcuin Papa, Juliet L. Javellana and Andrea T. Echavez*

Military agents raid Muslim community in QC...

(From page A1)

Bai Dido, whose husband Renla Mohamad, 27, was arrested, claimed that one of the arresting officers planted a grenade in her perfume box.

"One of them asked for a ball pen, so I looked for one in my perfume box. But I did not find one," Dido said.

She said that after telling the officer that she did not have a pen, she turned around and saw a grenade wrapped in white tape inside her perfume box.

"They planted it," Dido told the INQUIRER.

Around 30 agents raided the house between 2 and 3 a.m., breaking down doors and startling awake the 18 families who share the 10-room house, witnesses said.

"Most, if not all, of the doors in the house were destroyed since we were all asleep," Dido said.

At gunpoint, the 17 men were herded out of the house and into two vehicles to be brought for questioning to Isafp headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

Search warrant

The agents were armed with a warrant to search the house, where six men identified as Mamad Nadal, Abu Said, Saifuloclis Eunon, Rahro Tabunaway, Mohammad Amsaid and Jaafar Jajuri were suspected of stashing assorted unlicensed firearms and ammunition.

But Haji Malik Ibrahim, president of the Maguindanno Islamic Organization, said the raid appeared illegal because none of the six people named in the search warrant lived in the raided house. He added that the agents belatedly called the barangay chair, Nur Hassan, to witness the raid.

Makati Executive Judge Florentino Tauson Jr. issued the search warrant to a Lt. Julius P. Agdeppa, an operations officer of Isafp, on Wednesday. The Isafp men were looking for an unlicensed M-16 Armalite rifle, a .45-cal. pistol, a submachine gun and assorted ammunition.

Taking money

Relatives of the suspects said the soldiers also took P2,000 from the family of Arajib Lumalag and P3,000 from the family of John Menor.

The arrested men "are being jailed

for nothing. They did nothing wrong," said an upset Amira Ibrahim, whose brothers-in-law Arnold Montong, 28, and Romano Salik, 27, were among those arrested.

"We came to Manila to find peace and a better future for our families. And this is what we got? If we wanted trouble, we should have stayed in Mindanao," she said.

The families are boarders at the house owned by a certain Lumang Kulob of Cavite, said Dido, who runs the house for Kulob.

The morning after, the memory of the lightning raid remained vivid in the minds of the women.

"I was startled when suddenly they kicked the door open and they told us to lie face down. Even the kids were roused from sleep and were stunned by the raid," said Rowaida Lumalag, who was with her husband, Arajib Lumalag, 30, one of those arrested, and their four children, aged from 2 to 8.

"They never identified themselves and never told us what they were looking for. They just barged into our rooms," Ibrahim said.

Names

"We don't know why they were arrested but we believe the authorities will link them to the recent bombings as they have in the past," she said.

Malik Ibrahim, president of the Maguindanno Islamic Organization, agreed, saying that authorities have always been quick to blame Muslims for violent crimes in the metropolis.

Detained were Edgel; Mohamad; Montong; Salik; Lumalag; Menor; 29; Efron Mamintal; 26; Danny Kusain; 23; Legaspi Nanimbong; 23; Misuari Panayaman; 22; Aluin Kinal; 24; Sammy Unsi; 23; Japoy Abdullah; 18; Frederick Punzalan; 23; Allan Akmad; 34; Mohamad Balambag; 28; and Miranda Uplun, 26.

Some of the relatives of the suspects trooped yesterday to Central Police District (CPD) headquarters in Camp Karingal looking for their family members.

CPD policemen advised them to go instead to either Camp Aguinaldo or Camp Crame.

How bombs worked

Philippine National Police chief Di-

rector General Panfilo Lacson said yesterday that "we have established the motive" for the bombings, adding that "definitely, this is not connected to the impeachment trial" of President Estrada.

On Wednesday, he announced that he expected to produce suspects within two days.

Hours after the roundup, PNP officials announced that the bombs that killed 18 and injured nearly 100 more on Saturday were all improvised explosive devices (IED) detonated through the use of cellular phones.

PNP authorities, however, refused to comment on the arrests of the 17 Muslims.

PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Nicanor Bartolome said that the bombs that rocked the metropolis last Dec. 30 were activated by remote control using cellular phones.

"These are among the findings released today by the PNP as probes continue to dig deeper into the five almost simultaneous bombings," Bartolome said in a statement.

TNT

He said that the conclusion was based on crime laboratory tests on debris and other evidence gathered from the sites of the five blasts.

He said the bombs were "each composed of approximately three to four pounds of trinitrotoluene, commonly known as TNT, a type of high-order explosive with a distinctive shattering effect."

TNT—whose sale and use is regulated—is widely used for a variety of industrial applications especially in mining and quarrying, and is available on the local market.

Bartolome revealed that laboratory analysis of the evidence indicated the presence of fragments of what looked like parts of Nokia 3210 cellular phones.

The firing sequence of the bombs might have been initiated by an incoming call, he said. The call would have activated a delay timer before the final detonation of the main charge, he added.

He said that the investigators have reconstructed shattered cell phone parts recovered from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and from the Petron gasoline station near Dusit Hotel in Makati City.

'Why do they just randomly arrest Muslims?'

(From page A1)

the arrests.

"Why do they just randomly arrest Muslims? Not all Muslims are bad. If they're angry with some Muslims, they shouldn't be angry with all of us," said an upset Amira Ibrahim, whose brothers-in-law Arnold Montong, 28, and Romano Salik, 27, were among those detained.

The residents were not alone in their indignation. Muslim and Christian leaders in Luzon and Mindanao, human rights groups and opposition legislators roundly denounced the arrests, accusing the government of using Muslims as "scapegoats."

The Commission on Human Rights hit the arrests as not only illegal but also "spurious."

In a telephone interview, Nasser Marohomsalic, commissioner in charge of Muslim affairs, said that it appeared that the agents who made the arrests did not follow the proper legal procedure in conducting the raid.

"In my own opinion, the act of the raid was itself questionable," Marohomsalic said.

Datu Amerol Gulam-Ambiong, a leader of the Muslim community in Quinapo, Manila, condemned the arrests as "unjustifiable" and "inhuman."

Karapatan, a leftist group organizing a legal defense for the suspects, denied that those arrested were involved in the bombings and said that their rights had been violated.

The group said that as many as 21 Muslims had been seized but some of them had since been released.

Ambiong, chair of the Metro Manila Muslims Peace and Order Coordinating Council (MMPOCC), said that friends and relatives of the suspects in Culiati, Quezon City, knew the 17 to be "ordi-

nary citizens" who are "innocent and peace-loving."

Rey Magno Teves, convener of the Mindanao Peace Advocates Conference, warned of the raid's "grave implications" on ongoing efforts to bring both the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the government back to the negotiating table.

"This is very sad. It will be a big blow to the peace process in Mindanao," he said.

All over the land

"Outrage over the raid will spill all over the land. Muslims and Christians will not allow this gross violation of human rights and wanton display of government terrorism," said Prof. Moner Bajunaid, a former member of the MILF peace panel.

"That's terrible," said Fr. Eliseo Mercado Jr., president of the Notre Dame University. "It is very clear the Muslim people, Abu Sayyaf and the MILF don't have the technical expertise and skill to carry out those simultaneous bombings. The Muslims are being made scapegoats again."

Ambiong, the MMPOCC head, claimed that the Culiati raid displayed what he called the government's prejudice against Muslims.

The Muslim leader expressed fear that the arrested men could be physically forced into admitting participation in the bombings.

Philippine National Police chief Director General Panfilo Lacson came under sharp criticism from opposition lawmakers for allegedly making "fall guys" out of Muslims in an attempt to produce suspects in connection with the Dec. 30 bomb attacks.

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez noted that Lacson had earlier rounded up 23 Muslims for two mall bombings in May last year, who "until now are still in the

custody of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force instead of the proper courts."

Lacson on Wednesday said a "foreign-trained terrorist group" staged the Rizal Day precision-timed series of explosions.

Cynical

A cynical Golez said that the police general must now prove that the new batch of arrested Muslims—who were mostly construction workers, security guards and janitors—were really sophisticated terrorists able to penetrate tightly guarded areas like the airport and plant cell phone-triggered explosives.

"Or is this another 'wag the dog' ploy of Malacatang to generate controversy, portray Muslims as the villains, to divert public attention from (President Estrada's impeachment trial)?" he asked.

Negros Oriental Rep. Apolinario Lozada said "it is understandable for the police to effect simultaneous arrests now that (they are) under pressure—and so is President Estrada who is being suspected of plotting the terrorist attacks."

"Can they blame the people for not trusting their operations? The police have gained notoriety for picking up the wrong guys and make them undergo torturous circumstances to force admission of a crime and involvement in certain political groups," Lozada added.

Allah's punishment

Earlier, the MMPOCC and other Muslim groups in Manila had offered to cooperate with police investigating Saturday's attacks, and to pass on any leads.

They even vowed to personally apprehend the suspects, if it were found that Muslims were indeed involved.

But Ambiong echoed the sentiments of other Muslim groups when he maintained that Muslims were not respon-

sible for the bombings that killed 18 people and injured nearly 100 others.

"Even if the bombing suspects were Muslim rebels, our holy book Koran prohibits the targeting of civilians in times of struggle," Ambiong said. "The bombings were so gruesome I'm sure Allah's direct punishment will descend on the perpetrators in the afterlife."

In Marawi City, lawyer Macapanton Abbas Jr. denounced the raid as "the anti-Muslim campaign trademark of Estrada."

Abbas' relative Ismael Bebot Abbas was abducted earlier and is still missing. Police say the case is unrelated to the bombings.

'Hate campaign'

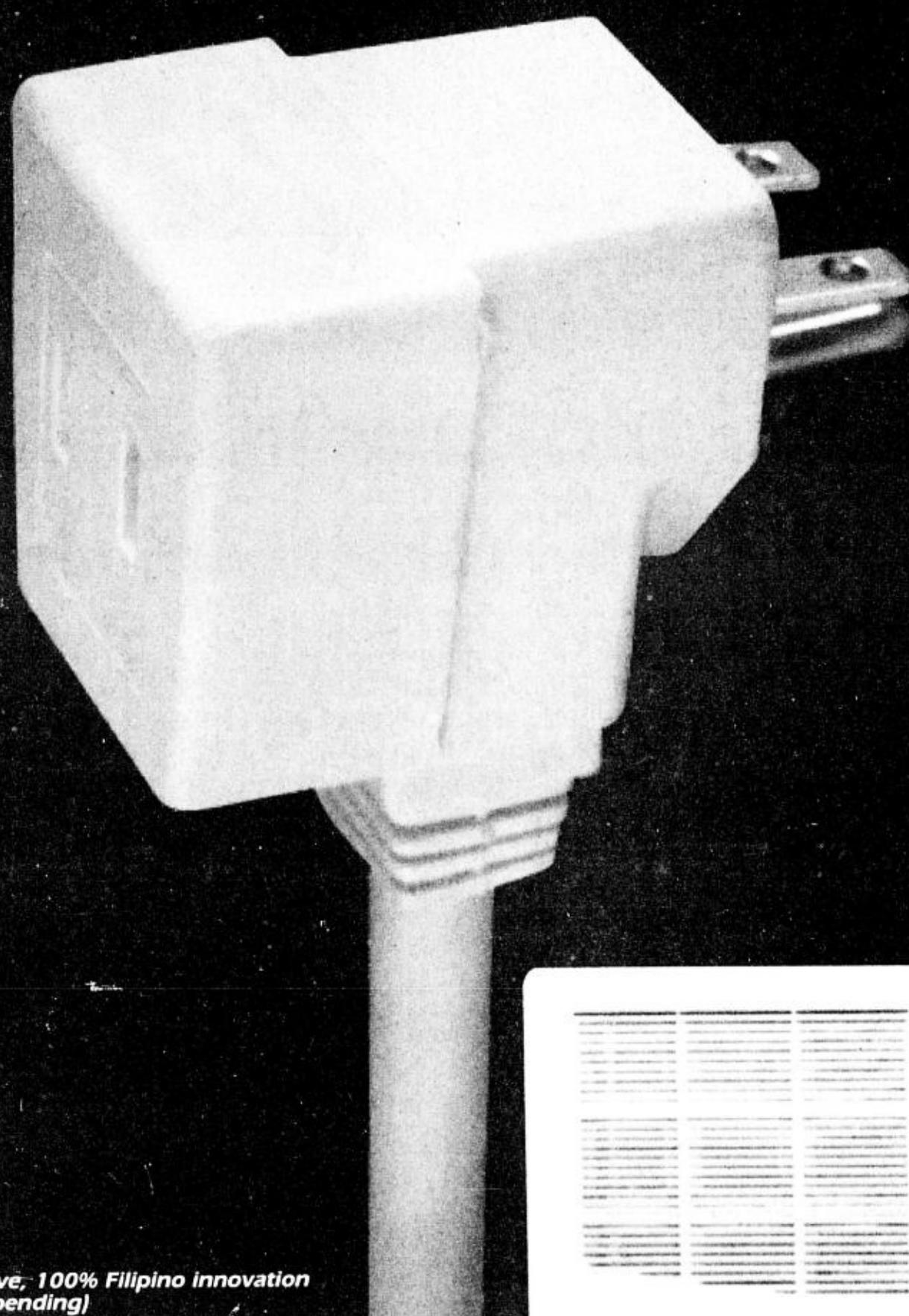
Baicon Macaraya of the Mindanao State University said, "It's unfair... They are creating once again an anti-Muslim feeling to save the President's ratings at the expense of the civilians in Mindanao."

In Digos City, Rashid Fernandez, a Balik-Islam, said, "With this habit of making Muslims as scapegoats, the animosity against Christians deepens. Sometimes I ask if this is some kind of a hate campaign."

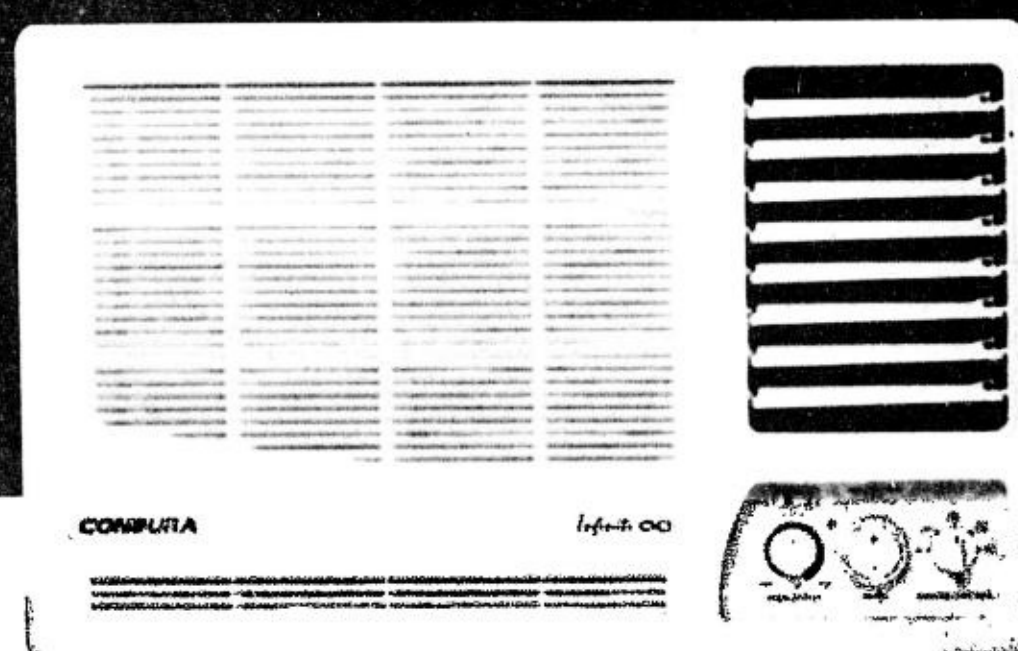
In Iligan City, Jamail Kamlian, vice chancellor for research and extension of the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology, said it has been "historically proven that Muslims are automatically made the usual suspects in violent incidents."

In Davao City, the Moro women's group Khadija accused the Estr

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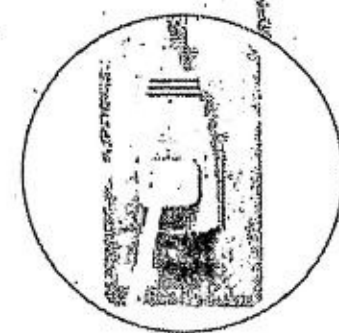
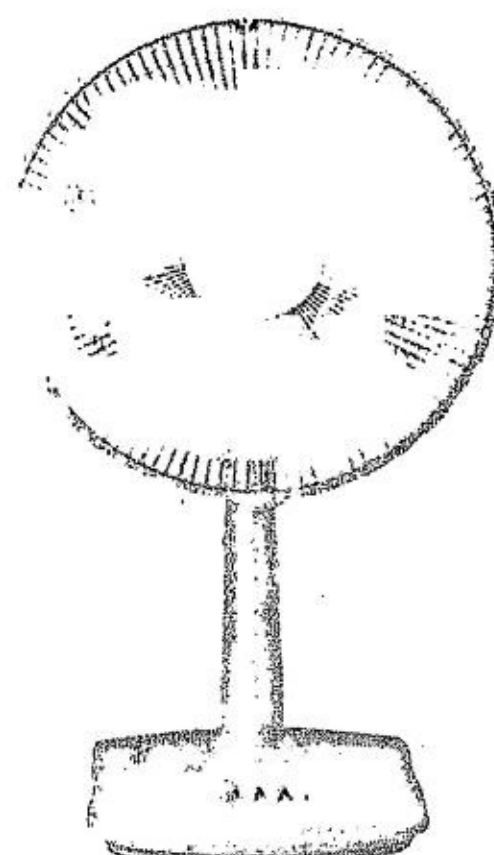
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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

Vol. 16 No. 28
ISSN
0116-2642

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at China Rocas Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati • P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines • Our new telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments; Editorial Fax 897-4793, 897-4794, Advertising 897-4807; Circulation 527-33-42, 527-33-48, 528-01-83, 528-01-86 and 528-02-13, Fax: 528-02-34.

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Out of the ordinary

EQUITABLE PCI Bank is denying that it participated in an attempt to cover up President Estrada's ownership of a P500-million trust account in the name of "Jose Velarde." In similar press statements released Wednesday, two top officials of the bank said there was nothing illegal in the attempt to transfer the account from "Velarde" to Jaime Dichaves during the second week of December.

Velarde has been identified as no other than President Estrada, by Clarissa Ocampo, senior vice president and head of the trust department of Equitable PCI Bank, and Manuel Curato, the bank's chief legal counsel. Ocampo and Curato testified at the impeachment trial that they witnessed Mr. Estrada sign on Feb. 4, 2000 several documents transferring P500 million from his account in one of the bank's branches to the trust account so that it could be lent to the Wellex Group, owned by William Gatchalian, one of the President's friends. Then only last Tuesday, Ocampo disclosed that upon the instructions of George Go, then Equitable PCI Bank chair, she had prepared the documents that would have transferred the P500-million account to Dichaves, another businessman-friend of Mr. Estrada. All the papers were signed on Dec. 13 in the office of one of Mr. Estrada's defense lawyers, Estelito Mendoza. But the transaction could not be consummated when Dichaves failed to produce a "directional letter" from the principal—meaning, Mr. Estrada—assigning ownership over the P500 million to him. Five days later on Dec. 18, Dichaves wrote the Senate claiming ownership over the Velarde account. He also said it was he who issued the P142-million check of Velarde, which was ultimately traced to a dummy corporation that purchased the "Boracay mansion" in New Manila, which one of Mr. Estrada's mistresses once used.

However, Ocampo in her press statement denied that Equitable PCI Bank participated in a cover-up. While saying she couldn't divine Dichaves' motives, she stressed that the bank "will never allow anything illegal." "An assignment of rights is not illegal, in fact it is a routine transaction," she said.

Go, who has resigned as chair but still sits on the board of Equitable PCI Bank, also said the assignment of an account by a principal to another person is a "perfectly normal bank practice and procedure." Besides, he added, "there was nothing to cover up in the first place" and the documents pertaining to the Velarde account would have been kept by the bank anyway.

Maybe so, but there are certain things about the failed transaction that are certainly out of the ordinary. First, there was Dichaves' instruction to antedate the transfer to Feb. 4, 2000, the very same day when Mr. Estrada signed the investment management agreement and other documents pertaining to the Velarde trust account. Is it normal banking practice to antedate documents to the same date as the signing of earlier documents? Didn't the bank officials smell something fishy about this stipulation? Of course, the bank could have kept the papers pertaining to the earlier transaction, like Go said, but it is also quite possible that they could have been "lost" and completely replaced with the new set of documents. Or given two sets of documents covering the same deposit and the same investment, would anyone in the bank be able to say with any degree of certainty that Velarde is Mr. Estrada and the P500-million investment was his?

Second, the signing of the transfer papers was done when everyone knew that the prosecution was hot on the trail of Jose Velarde. In his opening statement on Dec. 7, Rep. Joker Arroyo, the leader of the team prosecuting the charge of graft and corruption, already announced that Velarde was Mr. Estrada and that he issued the P142 million check. Ocampo said that after seeing the Velarde check being shown by Arroyo, she immediately knew she would eventually have to come out and identify Mr. Estrada as the man using Velarde as his alias in his dealings with the bank. And yet she and other bank officials claim not to have sensed anything unusual or even sinister in the attempt of Dichaves to get the Velarde trust account transferred to his name?

Of course, it is perfectly understandable that Equitable Bank officials would try their mighty best to keep its reputation intact. Its image has been tarnished by Go's links with Mr. Estrada, including his board membership in the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation, which received P200 million from *jueteng* payoffs, according to Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson. It was hit by substantial withdrawals after it seemed to balk at releasing documents subpoenaed by the court. Its participation in an attempt to cover up Mr. Estrada's money trail is hardly going to restore public confidence in it.

But what else can people conclude from this chain of events?

Who are the judges and who are the counsels?

THE CROSS-EXAMINATION by the defense of prosecution star witness Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson was a total bust. After five and a half hours of grilling, Erap lawyer Estelito Mendoza was not able to dent the direct testimony of Singson. In spite of efforts by Mendoza and pro-Erap senators to impugn his credibility and character, Singson remained credible as he stuck both to his testimony in the Senate blue ribbon committee hearings and to his direct testimony in the impeachment trial.

Worse, the clever Singson was able to link President Estrada repeatedly to the *jueteng* money. He never missed any opportunity to say that Erap was the final recipient of the *jueteng* payoffs and that it was Erap who was giving the orders. At least twice, Mendoza asked Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to order the witness to answer only the questions. But Singson countered that he had to explain the circumstances so everybody would understand his answers.

Finally, after more than five hours, Mendoza either had nothing more to ask or thought it better to quit before any more damage was inflicted on his client, and he decided to end the cross-examination.

Sure, he was able to extract some inconsistencies but they were very minor and did not harm Singson's main testimony. This was that, upon orders of Erap, he collected bribes from *jueteng* lords, laundered them in different bank accounts through Yolanda Ricaforte, and then delivered them personally in cash to Erap either in Malacañang or to his residence in San Juan.

Pro-Erap Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Ramon Revilla tried to make much of the weight of P130 million in P1,000-bills. At approximately one kilo per P1 million, P130 million would

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz



weigh around 130 kilos, too heavy for one or two persons to carry, they said.

Singson countered that the money was divided in three or four bags, that the bank's security guards helped carry them to Charlie "Along" Ang's car, and that the househelp in Erap's San Juan home must have helped carry them into the house. Besides, Ang must have brought only P90 million to San Juan, Singson said, as Erap acknowledged receiving only P70 million and First Lady Loi P20 million. The balance of P40 million Ang must have left in his house, which amount Ang and Jinggoy Estrada divided between themselves, Singson added.

Watching the impeachment trial sometimes confuses the viewer. He can't tell who are the judges and who are the prosecution and defense counsels. From their questions and the manner they ask them, one would think that some of the senator-judges are defense lawyers cross-examining the witnesses. In fact, they are more hostile to the prosecution witnesses than the real defense lawyers.

I like the manner lawyer Estelito Mendoza cross-examines witnesses. He was polite and calm, always smiling, and easy-going. There were no histrionics, ala the old Perry Mason shows, which some lawyers believe is the badge of a good lawyer. Not so with some of the sena-

tor-judges turned defense lawyers. They are only revealing their biases.

At yesterday's hearing, during which three viewers in the gallery irked Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Sen. Ramon Revilla broke his usual silence to say that from the questions and behavior of some senator-judges, the public can already gauge who would vote for acquittal and who would vote for conviction, even before the trial is finished and all the evidence are in. In other words, some of the senators have already prejudged the case. That is why he has been unusually silent, he said. He doesn't want the public to brand him as pro-Erap or anti-Erap.

Many people belittle Senator Revilla but I think he has the right idea. And the proper way to ban the senator-judges from doing leading questions of witnesses but ask them only through written questions sent to the presiding officer—as was done in the impeachment trial of US President Bill Clinton—is worthy of consideration.

With several television cameras focused on them and millions of viewers watching them on their TV sets, it is difficult for the senators not to succumb to the temptation to grandstand. They just must have their own two minutes of sound bite on TV. Their constituents may think they are *bobo*. So they just must stand up and ask something, even if their questions don't contribute anything to the quest for truth. In the end, the unmerciful eyes of TV merely show who of them are really *bobo*.

TODAY's Erap joke:
Erap will finally admit that he is Jose Velarde.

But he will deny that he is Joseph Estrada.

Courtroom ebb and flow

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican



the time being without responding fully in the press costs in the morale of the defense and its allies in the meantime. It also loads up one-sided presentations in the media that are antagonistic to the defense. Indeed, had the Ocampo testimony not been interrupted by 11 days of holidays, that testimony may have given the opposition to the President time to build up massive political momentum against him.

In legal circles, there is often told the famous exchange between Oliver Wendell Holmes, in the days well before he came a renowned jurist, and the poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson. It seems that Holmes, young and quite full of himself, wrote a stinging criticism of Plato and, being certain to procure the approbation of the great man, sent a copy of it forthwith to Emerson.

Months passed by and Holmes did not hear a peep from the sage. Finally, he chanced upon Emerson at a social gathering to which both had been invited in Boston. Eagerly, he approached Emerson and respectfully but confidently inquired from him whether Emerson had received and read his critique of Plato and if he had, what he thought of it. The great man turned around fully to Holmes, arched his eyebrows and gave his most sympathetic stare with this solitary and dismissive piece of advice: "Young man, when you strike at a king, you must kill him."

Such metaphoric advice proves true whether the political assault is upon Plato, Bill Clinton, or Joseph Estrada. Consequently, the burden—political as well legal—in this trial is always heavier upon the prosecution than it is upon the defense. Both sides need not only make their

cases but, equally important, avoid making more mistakes, or at any rate more important ones, than the other side. So far, the defense appears to have had a worst time of it than the prosecution. But never forget it hasn't made its case yet.

Moreover, what seems incriminating may or may not turn out to have an explanation that is both credible and legal. What people will actually profess to believe, however, depends more upon their political inclinations than upon anything else. Just don't make mistakes is the rule. In this light, the cover-up alleged by Ms Ocampo seems utter folly for the defense at first glance. Only time and further testimony will tell whether it was utter folly at last glance as well.

This situation may tax the creative abilities of the defense panel. Or perhaps it will turn out to be the truth, or a close facsimile of it. And if the latter sounds strange at this point, we will no doubt be reminded by the defense of the dictum of that other 19th century figure Daniel Webster that there is often nothing as strange as truth. In any event, don't lay any bets one way or the other on the verdict until we too have heard from the defense.

For now it looks like both sides, for different reasons, want a quick end to the trial, and may get it. They all know what has been revealed and what is likely to. The defense stands confident of acquittal. The prosecution wants to take their case to the people in May. Both may get their wish.

It gets harder to see beyond that, especially because the country itself, and not just the political class, is deeply divided. Unless these wounds heal, we will continue to limp along, a prospect which no one relishes.

But for as long the "bombs" are falling figuratively in daily testimony rather than literally outside, a successful resolution of this problem is possible, however distant that prospect may be. In the end, democracy is always about process more than about a desired outcome. Ask George W. Bush and Al Gore.

Scapegoats

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila



THE "USUAL SUSPECTS" trotted out by the government in the Dec. 30 bombings are the "enemies" it has created in the course of its "all-out war" on designated targets. They include the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the terrorist Abu Sayyaf, the communist rebels and the legal United Opposition. Yesterday, the Philippine National Police came up with a number of Muslim suspects.

These targets have become convenient scapegoats to shift attention away from the government's primary responsibility of protecting the lives of citizens from violent attacks and from the suspicion that the government—or undisciplined rogue elements within the government—are behind the terror bombings. From the "enemies" its confrontational policy has created, the Estrada administration has indeed set up a rogue's gallery to serve as scapegoats for its failure in maintaining law and order. The fact is that the bombings themselves—regardless of what group is responsible—are already damning proof that the President is not on top of things and has lost control. This failure alone makes the government a lightning rod of the backlash of anger over the massacre of innocent civilians.

Unlike most bombings or terrorist attacks in the past, not a single group has owned responsibility for the bombings. The MILF, Abu Sayyaf, the communists and the legal opposition, most of all, have denied responsibility immediately after the bombings. If anyone of these groups had a "political agenda" to promote—to repeat the phrase used by President Estrada when he went on radio and TV after the bombings—then it would have claimed responsibility.

The MILF and the Abu Sayyaf have nothing to gain politically from carrying out terror attacks in Metro Manila. The Abu Sayyaf is on the run. The best time to retaliate with terror was when the military/police launched punitive attacks after the release of the foreign hostages. The MILF has possibly nothing to gain politically by retaliating in Metro Manila months after the seizure of its camps. The MILF does not have to do anything to advance its separatist or greater au-

tonomy agenda. It can wait for the Estrada administration to fall or at least the outcome of the impeachment trial while refusing to enter into serious negotiations for a political settlement with this administration until a more conciliatory government takes office. The Muslims have served as historical scapegoats of the Manila government since we can remember. They have been bashed too often—mostly with military campaigns. This makes the PNP's attempt to blame the Muslims—again—hard to believe. The PNP's explanation just does not wash. It has the makings of a cover-up.

The legal opposition is the most unlikely group to conduct terror bombings killing civilians. It makes a lot of noise in the protests but it has neither the capacity nor the murderous and cold-blooded instincts to stage terror attacks on civilians. It is certainly the chattering class but its political tactics are suited for parliamentary politics—not for urban terror. Historically, the legal opposition has been the victims rather than the aggressors of terror attacks and political repression.

Vice President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo came out publicly early after the Dec. 30 bombings dissociating the United Opposition from the carnage. She and the leftist leaders anticipated that the government would blame them on the flimsy motive that they were campaigning for the resignation of President Estrada, and that the government would try to inflame public anger against them. Their early denials were aimed at seizing the initiative from the administration.

Although evidence emerging in several investigations tends to show that the communists were responsible for the grenade bombing at Plaza

Miranda in August 1971, killing and mangling leaders of the Liberal Party, in the effort to turn public indignation against President Marcos, the communists, after that incident, had concentrated their attacks on military targets and government vigilantes. The communists are much weaker militarily than they were during the Marcos dictatorship. Urban terror warfare was seen as giving them the opportunity to seize power. Today, they are farther away from seizing power than they were in the 1980s. Bombing civilian targets cannot advance their political agenda. The communists have in fact been inclined to take the parliamentary route after the Edsa Revolution.

This leads us to the government's responsibility. Whether or not President Estrada knew about the bombings or had given the go-ahead is not as important as the question of whether he can exploit the tensions to declare a state of national emergency that can suspend the impeachment trial in which he is being badly mauled by the disclosure of incriminating evidence on corruption. Whether or not the bombs were exploded by rogue elements in the military and/or police to force the President's hands into making rash decisions that can provoke widespread public disorder, the fact is that he has been offered the opportunity to use the martial law card to silence his political opponents. Marcos exploited the Plaza Miranda bombing to prepare the ground for the declaration of martial law in September 1972.

Estrada may direct public indignation to his ready-made scapegoats—principally the Muslims. But he cannot escape the backlash. The most important question is whether Estrada can make a successful martial law action. It took one year for Marcos to lay the legal groundwork and operational mechanism for martial law. When it was declared, most of his political opponents were arrested within 48 hours and the media closed within 24 hours. You need meticulous planning to achieve shock effect and to disarm opponents. Any martial law effort that can't neutralize opponents in 24 hours is bound to fail and to be messy. Estrada is not a planning man. If there's a coup, it will not be by him—but on him.

'Liar, Liar'

THAT was the title of a Jim Carrey comedy. The opening scene was a kid being asked by his teacher what his father's job was. What the teacher heard: "My dad's a liar." Only a bit later did the teacher realize that what the kid meant was "lawyer." The pun was the comedy's theme, that a lawyer won't be able to do a day's work if he didn't lie.

We couldn't help remembering that movie when President Estrada's defense counsel, Estelito Mendoza, was responding to witness Clarissa Ocampo's disclosures. Ocampo testified that the documents intended to cover up President Estrada's ownership of the "Jose Velarde" account, by assigning it to Jaime Dichaves, were signed at Mendoza's office.

He said George Go merely came to his office unannounced, and that one would have to entertain the chair of the country's third largest bank. He said Dichaves also just appeared in his office without an appointment. Mendoza said he didn't know anything about the documents signed by Go and Dichaves in his office.

What an explanation. There must be a hundred places in Manila where the big guys sign normally crucial and confidential documents. In business deals, they usually get the finest suite at a five-star hotel. Mendoza himself said that neither Go nor Dichaves were his clients. So why didn't the two meet at the offices of their lawyers?

We've been to Mendoza's office at a nondescript building on Rada Street in Legaspi Village. It's not a place you just drop in on the excuse that you were just in the neighborhood.

Well, Go and Dichaves "dropped by" Mendoza's office last Dec. 13. That was a few days after the prosecution panel disclosed the existence of the Jose Velarde check. Dichaves, two days before, wrote a letter to Senate President Aquilino Pimentel claiming that he was "Jose Velarde." A day after that, a friend of ours, who was providing certain services to Dichaves, was boasting to me that prosecutor Joker Arroyo—who had disclosed the Jose Velarde account—would soon be the country's laughing-stock.

Wouldn't the only rational explanation be that it was the President's lawyer in the impeachment trial who was supervising the attempt for a cover-up? And that Go and Dichaves were at Mendoza's office precisely for that?

If Mendoza were proven a liar regarding that incident, he stands to be disbarred. It's accepted that lawyers can do anything in using the court rules, even to the extent of overriding justice, to win their clients' cases. However, the big no-no is for the lawyer himself to tamper with the evidence. If it were a murder case, Mendoza's alleged involvement in the cover-up would be the equivalent of the defense lawyer himself writing the false affidavits of people providing the alibi for the killer.

Few people seem to believe Mendoza's explanation. An online poll of this paper's website, inquirer.net, asked starting Tuesday evening the following question: "Do you believe that Estelito Mendoza was involved in the attempt to conceal Velarde's true identity?" Some 96 percent of the 3,963 respondents in effect thought that the lawyer was lying.

We received a number of e-mail reacting to our column on Wednesday focusing on Crizele Acusin, the 6-year-old girl killed by one of the bombs last Dec. 30. One of them, from Ernie del Rosario of Cainta:

"I share your revulsion over the poor and innocent girl's cruel and so untimely death. My wife and I wept when we saw that front-page PDI picture as we came out of the early morning Sunday Mass. The dastardly act diminished us as a people.

"If I may suggest, can we possibly make a repeat of the Aug. 31, 1983 Ninoy funeral for this poor girl's internment? This is to show both our sympathy to the loved ones she left behind and demonstrate our collective outrage over this unspeakable crime."

That may be too late for Crizele, as her body was cremated the other day. However, the numerous organizations that have mushroomed in the past months, which have been undertaking nearly weekly rallies asking President Estrada to resign should take up Mr. Del Rosario's idea, at least for the other victims.

It will be tragic if the killing of the 18 Filipinos last Dec. 30 fades away from the front pages, with the nation unable to express its outrage over the brutal attack.

The protest movement should also take up the proposal of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption for the setting up of a "credible and independent" fact-finding commission to investigate the bombings. It won't be difficult to find Filipinos of integrity and with expertise, to man such a commission. Such a commission could even get funds from the Makati crowd to fund the best experts on terrorism and explosives to get to the bottom of the Dec. 30 bombings.

Right now, it is Estrada's men who are undertaking the investigation, with PNP Director General Panfilo Lacson on top of it all. That would be the equivalent of Gen. Fabian Ver heading the inquiry into Ninoy Aquino's assassination.

Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo doesn't have any real job right now. She should call for such an investigating body, and head it herself.

If you think outgoing Agriculture Secretary Edgardo Angara will make a difference as Estrada's executive secretary, take a look at Ronaldo Zamora's case.

When Estrada was elected in 1998, many thought Zamora was competent enough to fill in for the President's obvious weaknesses. More importantly, Zamora and his brother Manuel had been close since the 1960s to Estrada, their neighbor since their boyhood days. The two are even believed to have been responsible for convincing Estrada to run for mayor of San Juan, and funding him. Many also thought that Ronaldo with his brother Manuel, were Estrada's real brains, even his puppeteers. Indeed, Ronaldo on the eve of Estrada's election, had casually remarked to us: "Finally, we have our President." Ronaldo was referring to the fact he and his brother had failed to win the presidency for the late Ramon Mitra, their candidate in 1992.

Estrada however turned out to be more clever than the two brothers, and has been able push them out of the power loop. So far, there has been no evidence that the Zamoras were aware of the illegal deals for which Estrada is being accused now. If the Zamoras couldn't rein in Estrada, how could Angara?

Comments: rtiglaio@ing7.net

THEY SAID

Hopeless exercise

"Impeachment alone will not work. The behavior of the senators, who cannot go beyond grandstanding, partisanship and personal self-interests, attests to this."

—Gene Nisperos of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan

Truth

"When you stand by the truth, the truth will protect you. When you hide the truth, it is God Himself who will punish you because the Lord is Truth Himself."

—Jaime Cardinal Sin said in praising witnesses Emma Lim and Carmencita Itchon

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Two girls, two pictures, one horror

IN THE WAKE of the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, where 168 people died in what is acknowledged to be the worst case of terrorism on American soil, a photo was splashed in newspapers and magazines all over the world that summed up the horror of the event.

It showed a firefighter cradling in his arms a little girl soaked in blood. Doubtless the girl was one of the clients of the day-care center in the Murrah Federal Building, which was located on the ground floor and thus sustained the most severe damage—and the most casualties—since the delivery truck carrying the car bomb was parked almost directly in front. Perhaps it was the memory of this truly memorable image of the brutality and cruelty of terrorism that spurred the editors of the INQUIRER to select for publication a photo that carried echoes of it. This was used on the front page of the issue the day after "Black Saturday," where five bombs went off over a two-hour period, killing 18 and injuring almost 100 more. The girl in the photo, cradled in the arms of a barangay tanod, was one of those who died. She has been identified as Crizele Acusin, 6, who died, instantly it is hoped, when the first of the bombs exploded under her seat on the LRT carriage.

INQUIRER readers will not soon forget the photo. In it, Acusin is unidentifiable, her face blasted into a bloody pulp. One's first instinct is to turn away from the sight. But the longer one stares at the image, the more the horror, inhumanity and evil of the day's events are brought home. It is one thing to read faceless body counts and police reports. It is quite another to behold a crime's bloody consequences in full color.

A READER, however, begs to disagree. Picking up the Dec. 31 issue of this paper, Lita Puyat writes in a letter to the editor (which I received by e-mail), that she was "horrified to see the front-page photo...picking up the PDI that morning did not prepare me for the shocking, grisly photograph by Erik Arayas that you chose to feature in all its full color,

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



nearly half-page glory. "The sensationalistic and exploitative use of this photograph is more fit for a cheap tabloid or a forensics report, not front-page news reporting in the respectable newspaper the PDI purports to be. Repulsed and revolted by this photograph, my impulse was to shove the paper away, but I found myself scanning the stories to find out the fate of this unfortunate little girl (only) to find no information on her condition nor even any mention of her name!"

"This inexcusable, insensitive treatment of a human being, left anonymous after her image was used, was the other horror that left me speechless that morning. As if it were not enough to show her faceless, now she was even left nameless, like the bloody piece of meat your paper shoved her to be."

"What then, was the purpose of using this photograph on the front page? After suffering from the mindless act of animals who cold-bloodedly slaughtered their fellowmen, did she or her family deserve to be violated a second time this way? Did we, the readers, deserve to be violated ourselves, visually raped, by having this piece of media sensationalism shoved at us like a cold slap in the face?"

I DON'T know the circumstances behind the publication of Acusin's photo. But Ms Puyat should perhaps have been more understanding of the exigencies of daily journalism. At the time the Dec. 31 issue was put to bed, reporters and editors may not really have known who the girl was and what happened to her. And if they had mis-identified the little girl, wouldn't that have

been an even greater offense—and to two families, at that?

I happened to be in the newsroom the afternoon of the bombings and I can tell you it was controlled chaos at best at that time. A single bombing in the city is big enough news, but five in sequence?

On the front page of yesterday's issue, the editors chose to publish an equally prominent photo of Acusin in happier times. And truly, she was one sunny-faced little girl. If I was Acusin's mother, I truly wouldn't know what would be more painful: the sight of Acusin bathed in blood, or of her in all her shining innocence.

IF reader Puyat was appalled by the lack of "humanity" perceived in the use of a photo of an unidentified girl whose fate was unknown, perhaps the picture and story on Acusin and her family may make amends for that oversight.

But I wonder: Why reserve so much vitriol for the publication of a disturbing photograph but have no words of rebuke for those responsible for the little girl's death?

The seemingly coordinated bombings—which testify to a cold-blooded, surgical, precise and truly murderous campaign of terror and public intimidation—is almost too horrific for words. That it has political overtones only adds to the horror. For what political end could ever justify such indiscriminate murder and on such a scale? Law enforcement agencies have promised to solve the case and present suspects shortly. But what am I to make of a remark of a police acquaintance that his colleagues are saying: "We keep running around, looking for suspects when in all probability, the real criminals are among us?" Sometimes, it takes an image, and a bloody little girl in the arms of a rescue worker is one such image, to express the full horror and evil of a crime. It is the villains who planted the bombs and planned the bombings that deserve our anger. Let's not dissipate any more of it.

19th century 'tong' and brushes with the law

LAST Rizal Day, an otherwise pleasant evening in Malate was ruined by a wonderful member of "Manila's Finest." Around 10 p.m. I was the last of nine passengers to get off a van in front of the Portico on Adriatic Street when a WPD police car sounded its siren and stopped in front of our van. A policeman alighted from the squad car angrily asking for the owner of the van. When my brother-in-law identified himself as the owner of the Ford Expedition, the policeman demanded to see his license. Naturally, we asked what the problem was and the policeman claimed we were illegally parked and obstructed traffic. The driver was in the car, the motor was running and despite our explanation that we were getting off, he insisted on my brother-in-law's license. At this point we wondered, shouldn't traffic tickets be issued to the driver rather than the owner of the vehicle? We then pointed to our driver and asked for the policeman's name—his gruff reply: PO1 Lopeña. By then, *usiseros* were all round and someone from the restaurant came out to settle things. PO1 Lopeña drove away without issuing a ticket. Why did he pick on the Expedition and missed the unattended car parked and obstructing traffic between our van and the police car? Perhaps this was PO1 Lopeña's perverse way of spreading Christmas cheer?

The sad part of the story was having to explain police culture to our American guests. Our experience is not new to motorists in the Philippines, it is the stuff of Ramon Tulfo columns. But what made it relevant to me was that PO1 Lopeña and his ilk can trace their ancestry down to 19th century or even earlier. On Aug. 22, 1885, Fr. Casimiro Lafuente, parish priest of Santa Barbara, wrote a letter of complaint to the *alcalde mayor* of Pangasinan regarding the abuses connected with fees and fines on horses and horse-powered vehicles. There were no automobiles in the Philippines till the Americans brought one over in 1901 and Filipinos talked about "horse-

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



power" in a literal way.

Father Lafuente's letter was more than a complaint, it documented the different kinds of transportation available: *arañas*, *calesas*, omnibus, *tarantín*, carriages, *galosas*, *carros* and *carretones*. Carriages had wheels with spokes with a center of metal that was used by Chinese and other merchants as they traveled from town to town, market to market, carrying cloth and other merchandise. In Pangasinan, *carros* are called *carretones* and were exclusively used for agriculture. Used for heavy loads, these had wooden wheels and a roof of cane. Antique hardwood wheels have been converted to table tops in recent years but many reproductions can still be bought on the road up to Baguio. A *tarantín* is not a carriage, *carro* or *carretón*, it is characterized by two pieces of wood joined at the ends by a peg of wood or cane and was used during the rainy season or to transport goods in areas unpassable to a *carretón*.

Vehicle owners in Pangasinan, according to Father Lafuente, were *indios* but they were Spanish at heart. *Indios* were like dutiful children eager to please, serve, and obey Mother Spain, but when this kind mother—through her officials—turned into a *madrastra* or wicked stepmother, all goodwill is lost. Father Lafuente argued that *indios* should have some liberty and be allowed to travel the streets with their vehicles unmolested. Despite the payment of fees for a municipal or provincial license, vehicles

were stopped at whim and other fees and fines collected. In one case, the guardia civil stopped a vehicle and despite updated *cedula* and provincial license, the driver was not released until he handed over *buyo* and tobacco. Later in the day, the same car was stopped by an official in charge of carriages who again asked for the driver's *cedula* and papers releasing him only after a cup of nipa wine was offered as a bribe. If you think the above sounds familiar, try this. An *indio* approached the *cuadrillero* in the town tribunal, looking for a lost carabao. Naturally, he was asked to produce proof of ownership aside from having the carabao recognize its master. It's a pity cars cannot do the same and this example seems like the 19th century equivalent of having your car towed and brought to an impounding station. The carabao owner had to return to his home a town away on foot to retrieve his papers thus, he lost a full day of work and business. I wonder what other traffic violations could be imagined in those times—illegal parking, using the slow lane, swerving? How about fines for horses or carabao that urinate, defecate or fart in a public street?

Father Lafuente noted that many Pangasinenses took to wearing large pouches around their necks not for fashion but rather to keep all the necessary papers at hand for spot inspections. Father Lafuente condemned complicated taxes (some surely just *tong*) exacted by abusive police and government officials, and suggested that if the government truly needed revenue it could increase tribute or poll tax (payable only by men) and dispense with the various little taxes that complicate life. This 1885 complaint sounds true today as it did in 1885—some things never change.

Comments are welcome at ambeth@pusit.dmu.edu.ph

Earning respect the old-fashioned way

THE DECISION of the "new" Equitable PCI Bank under Ricardo Romulo, to support the testimony of its bank executives, only proves that the way to reduce a moral deficit is to reinforce the sense of duty, honor and prudence—and to discourage the impression that "the world owes me a living." Fortunately, this can be done not by lying to people or manipulating them by means of false surveys or press releases, but by telling them the truth about the human state.

According to a former law clerk of Chief Justice Earl Warren of the US Supreme Court, "Most people at heart do not want to be irresponsible hedonists or careerists, which is why they spend so much effort

on inventing moral rationalizations for their behavior." However, genuine satisfaction comes only from being a productive member of the community and from gaining the respect and love of other persons the old-fashioned way, by earning it.

Not that George L. Go was an incompetent boss. On the contrary, he steered the bank to greater heights. What he failed to consider was Earl Bunting's wise counsel, "The goals of business are inseparable from the goals of the whole community. Every attempt to sever the organic unity of business and the community inflicts equal hardship on both."—ERICK SAN JUAN, Suite 1402, PDCP Bank Centre, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

Unexplained wealth defined

SEN. Arturo M. Tolentino, in his article, "The Anti-Graft Law in Simple Terms," explained the following in regard to unexplained wealth:

"If a public officer is found to have an amount of property or money manifestly out of proportion to his salary and other lawful income, and he cannot explain the legitimate source of that wealth, such unexplained wealth is subject to confiscation by the government. All property acquired by him since he assumed office will be taken into account.

"In determining the wealth of a public officer, property placed in the name of his spouse, ascendants, descendants, relatives and other persons, but in fact acquired by him, are to be included.

"For the purpose of determining

unexplained wealth, the bank deposits of the public officer can be looked into, in spite of the law making such deposits secret and confidential."

It is clear from the above explanation that if President Estrada cannot show the legitimate source of his multi-million bank deposits which are grossly disproportionate to his salary and other lawful income, such wealth is subject to confiscation by the government. It logically follows then that the burden of proof is on President Estrada, not on the prosecution, to prove that the millions of pesos in bank deposits are not ill-gotten.—LEON L. ASA, lawyer, Laurel Law Offices, 15th Floor, JMT Corporate Condominium, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

The score so far

TO US watching the impeachment proceedings, the following are quite clear and obvious:

- The prosecution is unprepared, if not indifferent, in the presentation of their evidence. It is as if they expect to impeach the incumbent President solely on the perceived righteousness of their cause alone. It is time to wake up. More so, since judging from the behavior of the senator-judges, the President still has the numbers required to acquit him.

- The defense is all-out in making the trial proceedings similar to that of a criminal proceeding and appear to be quite successful at it, so that the quantum of evidence necessary to impeach becomes proof beyond reasonable doubt when it should not be so since the proceed-

ings are essentially political. In fact, should any of the grounds for impeachment by itself constitute a crime, the president who is impeached is not automatically convicted of the crime but must still stand trial for it and convicted by proof beyond reasonable doubt.

- The patience of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., if last Dec. 22's proceedings were to serve as a gauge, is wearing thin, what with the interminable objections of the defense on the so-called relevancy/materiality of evidence sought to be adduced—forgetting, perhaps, that they themselves are to blame for not requesting for a bill of particulars at the general phraseology of Article 2 of the impeachment charges.

- The constant grandstanding of

the senator-judges who, in their desire to show off to their respective masters that they are on the job, only succeed in disclosing their ignorance and mediocrity, apart of course, from their bias and pre-judgment of the case. In the court proceedings last Dec. 22, only Sen. Franklin Drilon's reading of the Articles of Impeachment and relating it to the anti-graft law made sense. Ditto for Sen. Raul Roco's apt reply to Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's observations on the P500-million Jose Velarde account vis-à-vis President Estrada's statement of assets and liabilities of 1999.

- The confusion which Clarissa Ocampo's testimony wrought on the defense who now speak in many tongues to discredit her. For in-

LETTERS

stance, while one claims she's not telling the truth, a euphemism that she lied, to save the bank from potential ruin, another claims that the President is merely acting for and in behalf of a third person who really owns the Jose Velarde account. Worse, the report that a counsel for the defense had earlier tried to dissuade Ocampo from testifying for the prosecution. If this report is true, said counsel could be charged with obstruction of justice.—L.M. ERMITANO, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

A simple view of things

MY friends and I who are simple-minded see everything in black and white. Our intellectual development has not reached the level of sophistication of former Supreme Court Chief Justice Andres Narvasa who likened President Estrada to Julius Caesar, or of Butz Aquino who likened the President to Ninoy Aquino whose many years of imprisonment and murder contributed to the toppling of the dictator Marcos.

On one side, we see ordinary people like us risking their lives and those of their loved ones just to tell the truth and nothing but the truth. There was Emma Lim testifying that she delivered millions of pesos of *jueteng* collections to the office of President Estrada in Malacañang, and collecting millions of pesos from the President's son, Jinggoy, in his San Juan office. There was Clarissa Ocampo testifying that she witnessed, one foot away, President Estrada signing his name as Jose Velarde on documents signifying ownership of P500 million in deposits at Equitable PCI Bank. There were the several winsome ladies and bank executives relating how Yolanda Ricaforte juggled tens of millions of pesos in many accounts which, upon reaching P200 million, eventually were handed to a private lawyer of President Estrada.

On the other side are President Estrada and his son Jinggoy denying all of the above, including

knowledge of Ricaforte, the faithful juggler and recorder of *jueteng* funds. Their denial reminded me of an advice once from a husband itching to be adulterous: if your wife catches you naked on top of a naked woman, say you just tripped and stumbled on the naked woman who happened to be where you fell down (ha-ha!).

Our simple minds function according to the simple truths which no one can deny to be true. These are: "A thing is what it is and is not what it is not," and "If two statements contradict each other, at least one of them is not true, although both of them can be false. Both of them, also, cannot be true at the same time."

Applying the simple principles above, we see the following: if Lim and Ocampo and the other woman are telling the truth, then President Estrada and his son Jinggoy cannot be telling the truth, since the statements of the two opposing parties contradict each other. In short, both the President and Jinggoy could be telling lies. In case Lim and Ocampo are lying, it does not necessarily mean that Erap and Jinggoy are telling the truth. They could still be liars.

There are many things around the President that make it very difficult to think that the testimony (on *jueteng* money, on Ricaforte and on Erap and Jinggoy) of Lim and Ocampo and all the other brave

and beautiful women are carefully contrived lies. It is also very difficult to believe the claimed ignorance, non-knowledge of Ricaforte. It is very difficult for the President to explain (to us who sweat for every peso we earn to feed and clothe our children and respective wives, at one wife per husband) the sources of the huge amounts (hundreds of millions of pesos) needed to maintain the luxurious residences and lifestyles of his numerous mistresses. What must one think about the President's admission of the receipt of P200 million by his lawyer for a "paper" foundation headed by the husband of his sister?

In contrast, the internal consistency and simplicity of the testimonies of Lim and Ocampo and all those other brave women and the price (which include probable loss of life and or the loss of income) is now a certainty for some of them. That they and their loved ones have to pay because they are telling the truth make it very difficult for us to think they are liars. Since they are not lying, the President and Jinggoy must be the ones who are lying. It is as simple as that.

That is how simple folk like us look at things. Did we miss anything? Probably we missed some things those who are more intelligent can see? — NING SANTOS, 46 Simoun St., Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City

Presidential intelligence

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—Alternatively, says a colleague who's looking over my shoulder as I write this, the title of this commentary should be "Presidential stupidity," or at least "Presidential dumbness." But that would not be in keeping with the spirit of goodwill this season.

Actually, this is more about the presidency in the United States that's about to be inaugurated with George Walker Bush at the helm after an excruciatingly flawed and painful (especially for Al Gore) election. Late last year, Jacob Weisberg, writing for the online Slate Magazine, asked, "Can super intelligence handicap a president?" It's a commentary on US presidents over time needing qualities other than intellect.

Though not scientific, since Weisberg's survey is based on anecdotal information, the piece is insightful and interesting. It's especially apropos these days as we are reminded of Bush's not too sterling intellectual credentials at Yale no less some 35 years ago. Considered as an alumni brat (his father George Herbert, of course, went to Yale), George W had a C average and so-so SAT scores. During the past campaign, the media had a field day wondering if he was dyslexic, as he would occasionally garble his words, e.g., *subliminal* for *subliminal*. There were comparisons with his father's vice president, Dan Quayle, who couldn't spell *potato*, and who thought Latin was the language of Latin America.

Some of Bush's conservative supporters, like noted columnist George Will, were quick to advance the thesis that there is no correlation between academic excellence and presidential performance, that in fact, "thickheadedness" is a "positive advantage." (How about "thickskinnedness" as in some cases we know?) The presumption is that people who are too smart may be limited in other ways, that they don't necessarily make good presidents. (I guess we heard this rhetoric in the 1998 Philippine presidential campaign, too.)

The argument then cites "less-than-brilliant" men who did extremely or reasonably well as occupants of the Oval Office. The list includes Ronald Reagan (Erap's idol), Franklin D. Roosevelt, strangely enough since everybody thought he was brilliant, and Harry Truman.

On the other side of the spectrum are the presidents who were intellectually gifted but deemed ineffectual. This list includes Jimmy Carter, Richard Nixon, Herbert Hoover and Woodrow Wilson.

A different category altogether, i.e., presidents who were extremely bright and intellectually formidable, but also damn good and highly capable, includes John Kennedy and Bill Clinton. Parenthetically, both presidents have been seen as morally foolhardy. Clinton has formidable brainpower and has immensely succeeded in economic and other aspects of domestic policy. He'll go down in history as a brilliant president. But quips Weisberg, somewhat naughtily, "where he does his thinking with other organs, he has undermined himself."

Still another distinct category, and you can make your own deductions of who falls under this, consists of relative dimwits who were also lousy or poor chief executives. (Rings a bell?) What a double whammy. This list includes Warren G. Harding, who reportedly described himself as "too dumb to be president." At least, he was honest. Also included, probably unkindly, in this dubious category is Gerard Ford, whom the late Lyndon Johnson characterized as having "played one too many games without a helmet." Speaking of Johnson himself, he presided over the "Great Society" with remarkable accomplishments, but may have been "led astray on both the Vietnam war and the war on poverty" by the "whiz kids."

The point of Weisberg's thesis is that, these supposed correlations between presidential intelligence/stupidity and presidential effectiveness/ineffectiveness might just be coincidences or observations lacking a basis in fact. The sample in any case is too small to be scientifically valid. It might be more instructive if we dealt with in-

dividual presidents in a more incisive manner.

For instance, was Reagan really a great president in spite of his lack of intellectual smarts? And is it possible that Carter was just coincidentally bright and inept, no correlation? Weisberg poses more pointed questions to demolish the presidential myth. Was Wilson an "un-great" president simply because Congress voted down the Treaty of Versailles? For that matter, was FDR, who took gentlemen's Cs (whatever that means in those days) at Harvard, less than highly intelligent?

The oft-repeated characterization of FDR was provided by Oliver Wendell Holmes, who thought the president possessed a "second-class intelligence but a first-class temperament." He also had a great political wit—never mind about his being "unserious" in college earlier.

Take Reagan, who has been called the "Great Communicator" by the pundits. His greatness, according to Weisberg, derived from his "unambiguous moral stand against communism, which gave powerful encouragement to the opposition in Eastern-bloc countries." But the success of this "moral certainty" standard had nothing to do with his "thickheadedness." He was just single-minded and unrelenting in his anti-communism, which he articulated with such fervor. He was probably one of the most ideological of contemporary presidents.

In fact Reagan could not grasp more complex realities in the American presidency and was often baffled by technical details of the federal budget. Reagan, according to his Budget Director David Stockman, "simply couldn't process the information that his contradictory goals would produce a vast deficit, despite repeated attempts to spell it out for him in words and pictures." Can you imagine how frustrated Stockman was? He was fired eventually and he wrote an unflattering book later about his erstwhile boss.

Another dramatic example is Nixon. After he resigned, he said, "You won't have Nixon to kick around anymore." Can his failure as a president be attributed to his intellectual shrewdness? Not really. Most scholars on the American presidency consider Nixon's détente with China as his most significant achievement, which was due to his own shrewd analysis of the situation, probably with the aid of foreign policy adviser Henry Kissinger. But Weisberg concludes, "Nixon was undone as president not because he was too shrewd but because of something shrewdness didn't help him with: personal bitterness and lack of scruples." This "dark side" of Nixon showed even when he tried to be "presidential." It seemed he never trusted anybody and he was paranoid. He taped everybody's conversations in the White House, which led to his undoing. It was not his intellect; it was his deep personal character flaw.

There is no question that the lack of intelligence is a drawback for any president. But Weisberg concludes that intelligence of the kind that might manifest itself in high SAT scores is not the most important quality in a chief executive. "Leadership, integrity and determination are all more critical qualities."

FDR got Cs in college, and George Walker Bush, the incoming 43rd president, also got Cs. In the case of the latter, we won't know how he did until four years from now.

And Weisberg adds wryly: "Dumb luck helps. Dumbness doesn't."

Belinda A. Aquino is professor of Political Science and Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she is also director of the Center for Philippine Studies.

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TV CONFLICT 100,000 protesters back journalists

PRAGUE—Defying freezing weather, some 100,000 people flocked to downtown Wenceslas Square to support striking TV journalists who are demanding the resignation of their channel's new director.

In what was the biggest rally since the 1989 Velvet Revolution that ousted communism, students, entire families and pensioners chanted: "Here we are," echoing the atmosphere of the anti-Communist upheaval.

Wednesday's gathering was the high point in a two-week-old conflict, essentially over independent reporting at state-run Czech Television. The

standoff appeared to be developing into a political crisis with as yet unpredictable implications. Many protesters Wednesday demanded early elections.

On Dec. 20, the Czech TV council appointed Jiri Hodac as director of Czech Television, triggering outrage among the channel's news staff, who claim the appointment was politically biased because Hodac is too close to former Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus.

The dissidents refused to work with Hodac, who in turn fired the rest of the management as well as some promi-

nent journalists. The rebellious news staff refused to give in and have since been holed up in the newsroom.

Zeman has so far backed Hodac and favors a compromise solution. But other leading Social Democrats say Hodac's resignation is the only way out.

"Politicians are liars, I don't like the deals they make, that's why we need freedom of speech," said Jan Gabriel, 49, a mathematician.

"I don't like the new TV management, their style, the way they speak and look and also the way they were elected," said student F.A. Podhajsky, 20.

On Tuesday, the leaders of four political parties failed to resolve the conflict. Klaus called on both sides to resign, while leaders of the two smaller opposition parties said fulfillment of the strikers' demands was the only solution.

The standoff reflects three years of political tension after the 1997 downfall of the Klaus-led center-right government, which was caused by a financial scandal in his Civic Democratic Party.

A bitter rivalry between Klaus and Havel, whose term ends in 2003, has dominated Czech politics ever since.

"I hear the politicians can't find a way out of this," one of the demonstrators, Jan Kraus, told the crowd on Wednesday. "We have a solution for them—early elections." Elections are scheduled for 2002.

In an attempt to defuse the crisis, Zeman's Cabinet approved a draft amendment of a media law governing Czech Television.

The amendment, still requiring parliamentary approval, makes changes in the appointment of the Czech Television council, a supervisory body that can elect and dismiss the station's director. AP

DIRECT LINKS ISSUE 'Taiwan's Chen playing politics'

BEIJING—China Thursday accused Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian of trying to dupe public opinion by opening limited direct links with the mainland and warned the measure would not lead to dialogue.

A commentary in the People's Daily said Chen was trying to force a dialogue without accepting Beijing's condition for talks—embracing its "One China" principle enshrining Taiwan as part of Chinese territory.

"The new leader of Taiwan continues to try to sell the so called three mini-links to the international community with the goal of creating a false appearance of improving cross-Straits ties, while cheating the Taiwan people and international public opinion," it said.

Taiwan formally opened direct trade, travel and postal links from two islands off China's coast on Tuesday when three ferries arrived at ports in Fujian province.

Taipei trumpeted the new limited links as a landmark event toward the improvement of cross-

Straits ties and the first official Taiwanese-sanctioned voyage to the mainland in nearly five decades.

The new ties have been dubbed the "three mini-links" as they enable links only between the Taiwanese islands of Kinmen and Matsu and the south Chinese ports of Xiamen and Fuzhou.

While China allowed the boats to dock it has been less than enthusiastic about the new initiative—Beijing insists it wants unlimited direct links allowing exchanges between all of Taiwan and the entire Chinese mainland.

The commentary in the overseas edition of the People's Daily, the Communist Party's mouthpiece, said unlimited direct links would vastly improve economic and trade ties which are expected to top \$25 billion this year.

While refusing to name President Chen directly, as the mainland press has done since his March 2000 election, the commentary urged Taipei to accept the "One China" principle. AFP



WARRIORS' PARADE

East Timorese traditional warriors parade in a football field in Ermera, East Timor, as Jose Alexandre "Xanana" Gusmao, president of the National Council of Timorese Resistance, visited the district, Jan. 3, to call for reconciliation in peace in the future.

Cancer scare among Balkan veterans gathers steam

ROME—As the cancer scare among Balkan veterans gathers steam, Italy is demanding more information from Nato about armor-piercing ammunition made with depleted uranium and Turkey, Spain, Finland and Portugal are beginning to screen their soldiers.

"The issue has taken a serious turn and the alarm caused is more than legitimate," Italian Premier Giuliano Amato said in an interview published Wednesday in La Repubblica newspaper.

Amato suggested that he did not believe Nato's assurances that the ammunition posed no health risk. "Now we fear things may not be so simple," he said.

Depleted uranium, a dense metal with low levels of radioactivity, is used

in artillery because of its ability to penetrate armor. But some believe the dust created upon impact may be harmful.

At Italy's urging, Nato scheduled top-level discussions on the ammunition for Saturday, the foreign ministry said Wednesday.

Last week, Italy said it would investigate illnesses among its soldiers who were deployed in Kosovo. The idea that depleted uranium ammunition was making soldiers sick. SFOR said the ammunition was used in Bosnia in the fall of 1994 and the fall of 1995.

In Kosovo, US warplanes used armor-piercing rounds containing depleted uranium mostly in the central, western and southwestern parts of the province—areas where Italian, Span-

ish, and Portuguese peacekeepers were later deployed.

The report of a UN task force sent to Kosovo to look into the ammunition risks is expected next month.

Italy's Green and Communist parties, both opponents of the Nato bombing campaign, have long voiced suspicions about the ammunition. With several recent cancer deaths among veterans, they have pressed the government hard to take some sort of action. The issue has dominated the Italian news.

"The time has come for Europe to take significant steps in forming an autonomous military force truly independent from the United States," said Armando Cossutta, who leads the Italian Communists, a member of the Amato government. AP

Voters set to elect magnate amid looming graft charges

BANGKOK—Thai voters look set to elect telecoms magnate Thaksin Shinawatra as their next prime minister on Saturday, punishing Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai's Democrats for the slow pace of recovery since the 1997 financial crisis.

Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai party has led all the way in the opinion polls, suffering only a small dip when the country's anti-corruption body indicted the businessman-turned-politician on graft charges last month.

Despite the ruling, and the threat of a five-year ban from politics, which will be decided by the Con-

stitutional Court within a few months, Thaksin has vowed to claim the premiership if Thai Rak Thai wins the poll.

Business leaders and analysts have expressed dismay at the prospect of a chaotic aftermath to the election, where Thaksin may rule for a brief period before being banished from politics.

But with support for the Democrats running at 23.3 percent against 40.2 percent for Thai Rak Thai, according to the latest Bangkok University poll, pundits are tipping a victory for the upstarts, who will then work to cobble together a multi-party coalition.

Thaksin made a dramatic appeal for support as the campaign drew to a

close this week, portraying himself as a wounded fighter determined to win the battle.

"They want me to be premier. They tell me that even if it's for a short time they want me to take the post to implement party policies," he told the Bangkok Post.

"My vision is not blurred. I can still aim my gun and pull the trigger," he said. "Before I die I want to kill our enemies first, and these are poverty, drugs and corruption."

Amid calls for him to step down gracefully, or at least name a successor in the event his appeal in the Constitutional Court fails, he insisted he would cling on to power for as long as possible. AFP

17 is an age to fear in Japan

TOKYO—A wave of mindless crime by Japanese teenagers, many of them 17-year-olds, has shocked the country and drawn intense media scrutiny because of the cruelty of the acts and their bizarre motives.

One 17-year-old boy bludgeoned passengers at a Tokyo subway station with a baseball bat after a fight with his father, another hurled a bomb into a video store just to see people torn apart while a third stabbed an elderly neighbor to death because he wanted to know what it felt like to kill.

Another 17-year-old got into a fight with members of his high school baseball club over haircuts and then went home and beat his mother to death with a baseball bat because she would not give him pocket money, police said.

In the latest case, a pair of 16-year-old lovers was arrested in December for stabbing a taxi driver to

death. They were quoted as telling police they wanted to steal the driver's money so they could live together.

Crime among teenagers was rated the top story of the year 2000 by the Kyodo news agency. The law even had to be changed in an attempt to deal with violent teenage crime in a land renowned for its safety.

Overall youth crime numbers were up only slightly for the first six months of last year—to 1,063 incidents compared with 1,042 in the same period in 1999. But the number of murders doubled to 53.

And the headline-grabbing nature of the crimes has convinced many Japanese that teenage crime is one of the country's most pressing social problems.

"In today's society, with its stress on everyone following the same course and pursuing the same goals, there are so few chances to recover your footing once you've stumbled—if you've been bullied, for example, or if you've

failed an entrance exam," Keigo Okonogi, professor of psychiatric medicine at Tokyo International University, wrote in the Asahi Shimbun.

The pressure faced by young people, combined with a changing psychology among the young, has made them more narcissistic than previous generations, which could be a reason for the increase in youth crime, Okonogi said.

"Young people today... recognize no controlling principle beyond themselves. Desire is to be satisfied, not controlled, and nowadays the urge to fill any desire finds external support, either from friends or from the media," he said.

The crimes have been cruel, unpredictable and often deadly.

In one incident in May, a 17-year-old boy brandishing a knife commandeered a bus, stabbed a 68-year-old woman to death, wounded three passengers and used a six-year-old girl as a human shield in a 15-hour stand-off

Indon food spice made from pork recalled

JAKARTA—The subsidiary of a Japanese food company in the world's most populous Muslim nation is recalling a widely used flavor enhancer condemned by clerics for containing a pork-based enzyme banned by Islamic law.

Joko Suprianto, a spokesperson for PT Ajinomoto Indonesia, which produces the monosodium glutamate-based seasoning, said Thursday the product will be taken off supermarket shelves or relabeled to drop the "halal" designation—Arabic for "allowed."

The move came after the Indonesian Council of Ulema last week accused the company of using enzymes grown on pork fat in the production of the taste enhancer.

Under a 1997 government decree, the religious authority certifies that foods are fit to be consumed by Indonesia's Muslims. Food approved as halal cannot include or have been in contact with pork, pork byproducts or the meat of any creature not freshly slaughtered and cleaned.

Suprianto said it would take about two weeks to comply with the council's decision.

About 85 percent of Indonesia's 203 million people are Muslims. Since the ouster of the country's longtime dictator Suharto in 1998, some radical Muslim groups have been pushing for the introduction of Islamic or Sharia law in the country.

Many Muslims, however, only nominally adhere to the religion, and it was not immediately clear whether the controversy over the flavor enhancer would affect sales.

Monosodium glutamate is widely used as a food additive and cooking ingredient throughout Asia. Supermarkets in Indonesia normally feature dozens of products designed to enhance the taste of foods or to serve as tenderizing marinades. These range from pleasantly mild to tongue-scorching piquant. AP

Iraq denies reports of Saddam illness

BAGHDAD—Iraq on Wednesday dismissed reports that President Saddam Hussein had suffered a stroke over the weekend.

Some media outlets in England and Germany have run reports based on claims from the exiled Iraqi opposition that Saddam is in intensive care after the stroke.

"These reports are so silly that they do not even deserve a reply," said Salam Khatab al-Nassiri, director general of the information department at the ministry of culture and information.

The official Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Saddam chaired a Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, the first in 2001. The Cabinet hailed the Palestinian people's courage in their uprising against Israeli occupation, INA said.

The INA also released a photograph to Reuters, which it said depicted the Iraqi leader at Wednesday's Cabinet meeting.

"All of the world has seen how President Saddam Hussein had stood for more than five hours greeting units of our brave Army at the Al-Aqsa Call Parade," Nassiri said.

"He also fired more than 140 shots one-handed, something most young people are unable to do—this alone is enough as a reply to this absurd news," he added.

Saddam presided on Sunday over what appeared to be the biggest military parade in Baghdad since the 1991 Gulf War, greeting Army units with shots from a rifle he held in one hand. Reuters



SENATOR Hillary Rodham Clinton (right) poses for photographers with daughter Chelsea and President Bill Clinton following her swearing in ceremony in Washington, Jan. 3. REUTERS

Hillary becomes 1st presidential spouse in US Congress

WASHINGTON—Hillary Rodham Clinton made US political history Wednesday, becoming the first presidential spouse in Congress when she was sworn in as a senator from New York.

Clinton enters the Congress fairly low on the seniority ladder, but she was one of the stars of the show as the 34 newly elected and re-elected senators were called in alphabetical order to take the oath of office.

Dressed in a bright turquoise pantsuit, Clinton easily stood out against her dark-suited colleagues.

US President Bill Clinton and daughter Chelsea held hands tightly as Clinton raised her right hand and swore to "uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States." They then burst into applause along with some 300 other visitors as she accepted her six-year term as a freshman senator in the 107th Congress.

Defeated presidential candidate and standing Vice President Al Gore presided over the ceremony. In the House of Representatives, 41 new members were to be sworn in to the 435-seat body.

On Nov. 7, Clinton won a clear victory over her Republican opponent, Rick Lazio, to become one of two senators from the northeastern state of New York, replacing Senate veteran Patrick Moynihan, who retired.

Clinton bought a house in Chappaqua, New York, in January 1999—just before announcing her Senate candidacy—and her residency

status was an issue in the hotly contested campaign.

But New York's senior senator, Charles Schumer, said he was pleased with Clinton's victory.

"I think we're going to be a great team," he told reporters after the swearing-in ceremony. "Having an intelligent, dedicated, hardworking teammate will be really great."

"I'll do my best not to steal Hillary's limelight," he joked.

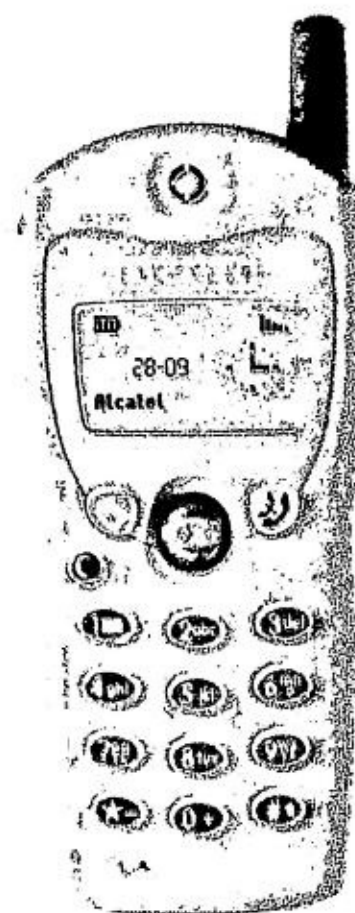
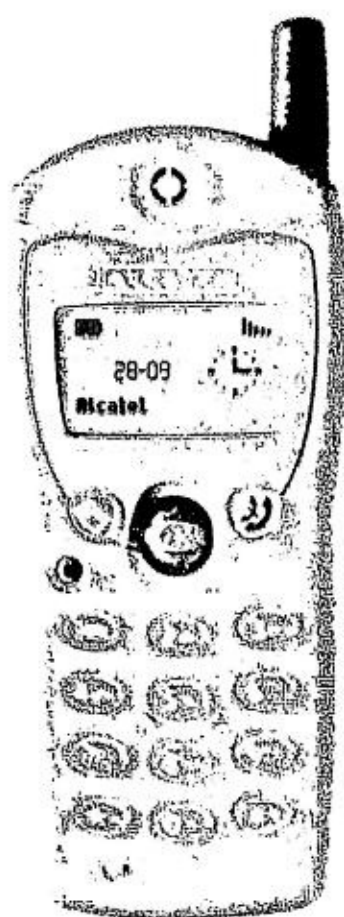
Clinton's role as first lady will end in 17 days, on Jan. 20, when her husband steps down after two terms in office and Republican President-elect George W. Bush is inaugurated as the country's 43rd president.

In spite of repeated statements that she wishes to be treated as one among the 100 senators, Clinton is expected to rise up the political ladder.

"I think she's a terribly bright, effective and articulate woman who will become a power in the Senate, but it will take time," said Lee Hamilton, a respected 34-year veteran of Congress who currently heads the Washington-based Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

The Senate's 50 Democrats, including Clinton and Jean Carnahan—who stepped in for her late husband, Mel Carnahan, and who also was sworn in Wednesday—will briefly have control of the body, since Gore now holds the tie-breaking vote. AFP

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A STATEMENT ON THE BOMBINGS

Estrada can no longer remain as president. The Metro-Manila bombings will not distract us from this conclusion. In fact, the deaths and destruction wrought by the Dec. 30 bombings only make Estrada's departure more urgent and compelling.

Earlier evidence from the impeachment trial that Estrada received jueteng protection money is our basis for declaring that he has lost the moral authority to govern. Further evidence that Estrada is Jose Velarde with billions in hidden and unexplained wealth has eliminated whatever remains of his credibility as president of our nation. The Dec. 30 terrorist attacks do not alter these conclusions.

The Metro-Manila bombings is a terrible demonstration that Estrada has lost effective control of national security and public safety. It is not necessary, even if entirely possible, that an Estrada supporter be proven to be involved in these Bombings in order for us to lay the blame on his office. Estrada's inability as commander-in-chief to effectively protect the lives of innocent civilians in our nation's prime metropolitan center, particularly the masses who ride the LRT and public utility buses, from terrorist attacks is enough for us to declare him ultimately responsible for the damage wrought by these attacks.

Thus our cry as a people is: Bistado ka na! Hindi mo na kaya! Alis na!

The following statements explain our position concerning the immediate consequences of the Metro-Manila bombings:

1. We deeply mourn the innocent victims of the Dec. 30 bomb attacks. Each one of these victims had lives of importance and meaning, which were ruthlessly terminated. We sympathize with the families and friends of the dead and injured. We declare that Estrada is ultimately responsible for the victim's great loss because of this president's critical failure to protect innocent people from acts of savage terrorism.
2. We strongly denounce whoever perpetrated these terrorist acts regardless of their reason or purpose for undertaking these acts. We condemn these acts of violence inflicted by terrorist upon the innocent. We demand the identification, pursuit, arrest, prosecution and punishment of these terrorists in accordance with our laws. We also declare Estrada as the one ultimately responsible for his government's tragic inability to prevent the occurrence of these deadly crimes by its failure to effectively contain or neutralize terrorist groups.
3. We assert our right to continue our normal lives without fear, including our pursuit of a determined, truthful and just impeachment trial as a mechanism for lawfully terminating Estrada's term as president. We declare Estrada as the one ultimately responsible for any chilling or distracting effects created by these terrorist attacks upon the people's full exercise of their freedoms as well as on the continued vigor and vigilance of the impeachment trial participants, especially the prosecution witnesses. There are many theories about Dec. 30 bombings. Estrada's abject loss of credibility may have emboldened the enemies of the people to launch these terrorist attacks. Estrada's loose grip on the reins of the state may have weakened the ability of our law enforcers to prevent these attacks and protect the people. Misguided elements may have even thought that they would help preserve Estrada in power by undertaking these attacks. These speculations are still without basis on reliable facts. Whatever maybe the eventual truth behind the Dec. 30 bombings, however, One central fact is clear today: Estrada has lost the moral standing to govern As president; he can no longer be believed as a national leader; he no longer has effective control of the machinery for upholding national security and protecting Citizen's safety. For these reasons, Estrada must go now.

Bistado ka na! Hindi mo na kaya! Alis na!

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KOMPIL II
KONGRESO NG MAMAMAYANG PILIPINO

Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Aklan radio program director assassinated

BY ODON BANDIOLA
AND RECTO VIDAL
PDI Visayas Bureau

KALIBO, Aklan—The program director of radio station RMN-dyKR here was shot dead at about 9:30 p.m. Wednesday while he was on his way to his parent's house in Lezo town, some 8 kilometers west of this capital town.

Roland Ureta died of five bullet wounds after motorcycle-riding suspects waylaid and fired at him at the provincial road in Barangay Bagto.

It was the first time in recent years that a journalist was killed in Aklan. Ureta's death shocked his colleagues in Aklan.

Aklan Rep. Allen Quimpo condemned the killing and offered a P50,000 reward for any information leading to the arrest of the assail-

ants. The Radio Mindanao Network has also pledged a similar amount.

Augusto Tolentino, RMN-dyKR station manager and chair of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas-Aklan chapter, said the killing might have been triggered by the victim's hard-hitting commentaries.

His recent commentaries had been directed at a government employee accused of extortion; a police officer suspected of being involved in the trafficking of illegal drugs; and a Sangguniang Kabataan official allegedly involved in a string of criminal acts.

Ureta's wife Emily yesterday said over dyKR that her husband received death threats from persons whom she refused to identify.

"My husband may be a hard-hitting radio commentator but he is by nature a gentle person," she said.

Emily said her husband was excited because they were about to move to their "dream house" in Barangay Linabuan Norte, Kalibo. The couple has a three-year-old child.

Jerome Tolentino, RMN-dyKR police reporter, said Ureta left the station at about 9 p.m. on Wednesday after his evening radio program "Agong Nightwatch."

"He was supposed to meet his uncle who just arrived from Canada," he said.

Initial police reports showed that at least two unidentified men on board a motorcycle were tailing Ureta who was also riding his black motorcycle.

The suspects caught up with him at the provincial road and shot him in the back. Ureta managed to run for about 100 meters as indicated in the bloodstains found on the road,

investigators said.

Ureta reportedly banged on the gate of the house owned by one Edgar Retonio to ask for help. It was there where the gunmen finished him off. Ureta's motorcycle was later found in an irrigation canal beside the national highway.

The Lezo police recovered four shells of cal. 45 pistols at the crime scene.

Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores condemned the killing and ordered Supt. Oscar Aycocho, Aklan police director, to create a task force to arrest the suspects.

Aycocho said his men were looking into the recent commentaries made by Ureta as possible leads.

Aside from the nightly "Agong Nightwatch," Ureta also anchored "Pulso it Banwa, Part II," aired from 11 a.m. to noon.

Boy plays with gun, shoots friend dead

BY CARLA GOMEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A 12-year-old boy wept profusely Wednesday afternoon inside this city's police station, begging God to let his friend live. He promised he would accept whatever penalty he would receive for accidentally shooting his friend.

At the time, John did not know yet that his 11-year-old playmate, Felix Ramilo Quenquero, was already dead, said SPO3 Amancio Abrera.

John accidentally fired a .38 caliber improvised revolver owned by his father while playing with his friends inside the family compound in Barangay Zone 5, Talisay City at 3:15 p.m. Wednesday.

Quenquero, who was among John's playmates, was hit in the chest. Doctors declared the boy dead on arrival at the Riverside Medical Center in Bacolod City, 7.3 kilometers south of Talisay.

Abrera said John, an only child, has been placed in the custody of SPO3 Delia Valencia of the Talisay Police Children and Women's Desk

and would be turned over to the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Police were still waiting for an opinion from the city prosecutor's office on what case to file against the boy. The victim's parents had not also coordinated with the police.

John's father had not also produced a license for the .38 caliber revolver, a six-shooter with no serial number. The firearm still had five bullets in it when it was turned over to the police.

Police investigation showed that John, Quenquero and five other children were playing with plastic toy guns inside the compound owned by John's family.

One friend allegedly asked John about his father's gun and the boy went to the family bedroom to get it.

As the boys were looking at the weapon, it accidentally fired, causing them to scamper away. But Quenquero was hit in the left side of his chest.

John and Quenquero are both Grade 5 pupils. Quenquero is from neighboring Barangay Zone 6 in Talisay.

'Salvage' victims found

STA. TERESITA, Batangas—Fishermen plying their early morning trade off Taal Lake were shocked Jan. 2 when, instead of a school of fish and shrimps, they found two decomposing bodies of a couple in Barangay Cuta West, a part of the lake, police reported yesterday.

Both were hogtied and bore signs of torture. Police said the victims, who were still unidentified, had bullet and stab wounds in different parts of the body.

The man's hands were handcuffed, while those of the woman's were tied with a nylon chord.

Both were gagged with masking tapes and bore gunshot wounds in the forehead and chest.

The man, police said, was about 25-30 years old while the woman, was 20-25, said Senior Supt. Florante Baguio, Batangas police provincial director.

According to an autopsy conducted by municipal health officer Mariano Villano, the victims could have been killed about five days ago.

Residents, who requested anonymity, told police that they noticed a motorboat roaming the barangay on New Year's eve, amid the holiday revelry.

After stopping at a certain area, the boat sped off but the people did not notice anything unusual about it since they were busy with the New Year's celebration.

It was only on Jan. 2 when the bodies were discovered.

Police said the couple could not be natives of the area since nobody have yet identified or claimed the bodies now buried in marked graves at the Taal Municipal Cemetery, Baguio said.

Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

measured in megatons? A megaton is roughly equivalent to 1 million tons of TNT or trinitrotoluene, the substance used to manufacture dynamite. To give you an idea of its immense destructive power, the bomb that leveled Hiroshima had a power of only 16,000 tons of TNT. Today's A-bombs have power upwards of 100 megatons.

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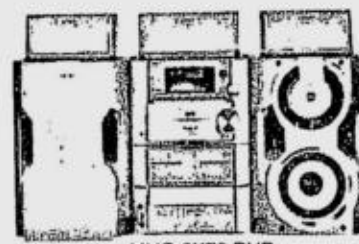
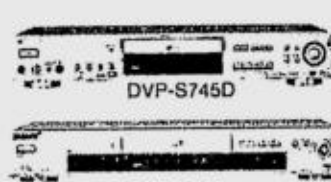
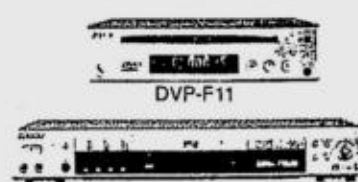
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'ECOL-LEGE'

Mangoes open doors to college for poor pupils

BY DESIREE CALUZA
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Ten years from now, at least 100 Grade 1 pupils each from the Cordillera's six provinces and a city, would be trooping to college funded by earnings from their mango farms.

The Department of Agriculture and the Baguio Regreening Movement (BRM) had set these children's future as early as last year when they distributed 400 mango seedlings to pupils of the Kayan Elementary School in Barangay Kayan in Tadian, Mt. Province.

The program, called "Ecol-lege," would provide an opportunity for the children to plant, maintain and collectively own a tree farm to sup-

port their college education.

"Seven years from now, these trees would be bearing fruit, the fruits would be harvested and sold. The earnings would be kept in a trust fund and would be used later by these children for their future," Swanee Dicang, communications consultant of the regional Department of Agriculture, said.

The project started last year when the pupils participated in planting mango seedlings in a one-hectare lot in the Kayan Elementary School in April last year.

This year, Dicang said, the project proponents would reach out to the remote villages of the Cordilleras to ask children of poor families to join the project.

"It was a beautiful sight to see the

children plant mango seedlings with their parents in their future mango farm," he said, referring to the tree planting activity in Tadian last April.

Dicang said he hopes the mango plantations would produce high-quality fruits that could pass standards of the international market.

He said the mangoes produced in the region's plantations could be offered to consumers in Europe, China and Hong Kong.

Dicang said aside from the children's pledge to take care of their mango farms, the DA would help maintain the farms through its technical staff and by providing fertilizers. DA technicians would check the trees every four months, he said.

Ramon Dacawi, a journalist and a BRM member, had first thought

of the mango plantation project when he conducted a journalism seminar in Tadian in 1999.

He said an elder in the area had sought his help in soliciting mahogany seeds for the pupils to plant.

"On my way home, I thought 'why not mangoes instead of mahogany trees so that we will not be cutting trees anymore,'" Dacawi said.

Eucalyptus trees, too

It was not the first time for the DA and BRM to launch a tree-planting project that would benefit children and their communities.

In January 1999, children of Barangay Gonogon in Bontoc, Mt. Province, through the assistance of the DA and BRM, planted eucalyptus trees on a mountain slope above the Chico River.

Dacawi said when the trees reach a prescribed size fit for electric posts, the children who planted them could sell them to an electric cooperative.

When the project was first conceptualized in 1996, the Benguet Electric Cooperative (Beneco) promised to buy the trees cultivated by the children and their communities for the cooperative's rural electrification program.

Beneco participated in the launching of the "Ecol-lege" project in Barangay Nangalisan in Tuba and Barangay Dalupirip in Itogon, both in Benguet, when participants planted 2,000 mahogany seedlings in the towns.

Dicang said project proponents decided to recommend the planting of mango trees instead of eucalyptus and mahogany trees because

mangoes seem to be more lucrative because they are cash crops.

He said the DA and BRM would go to Abra and Kalinga to look for areas where they can plant the mango seedlings.

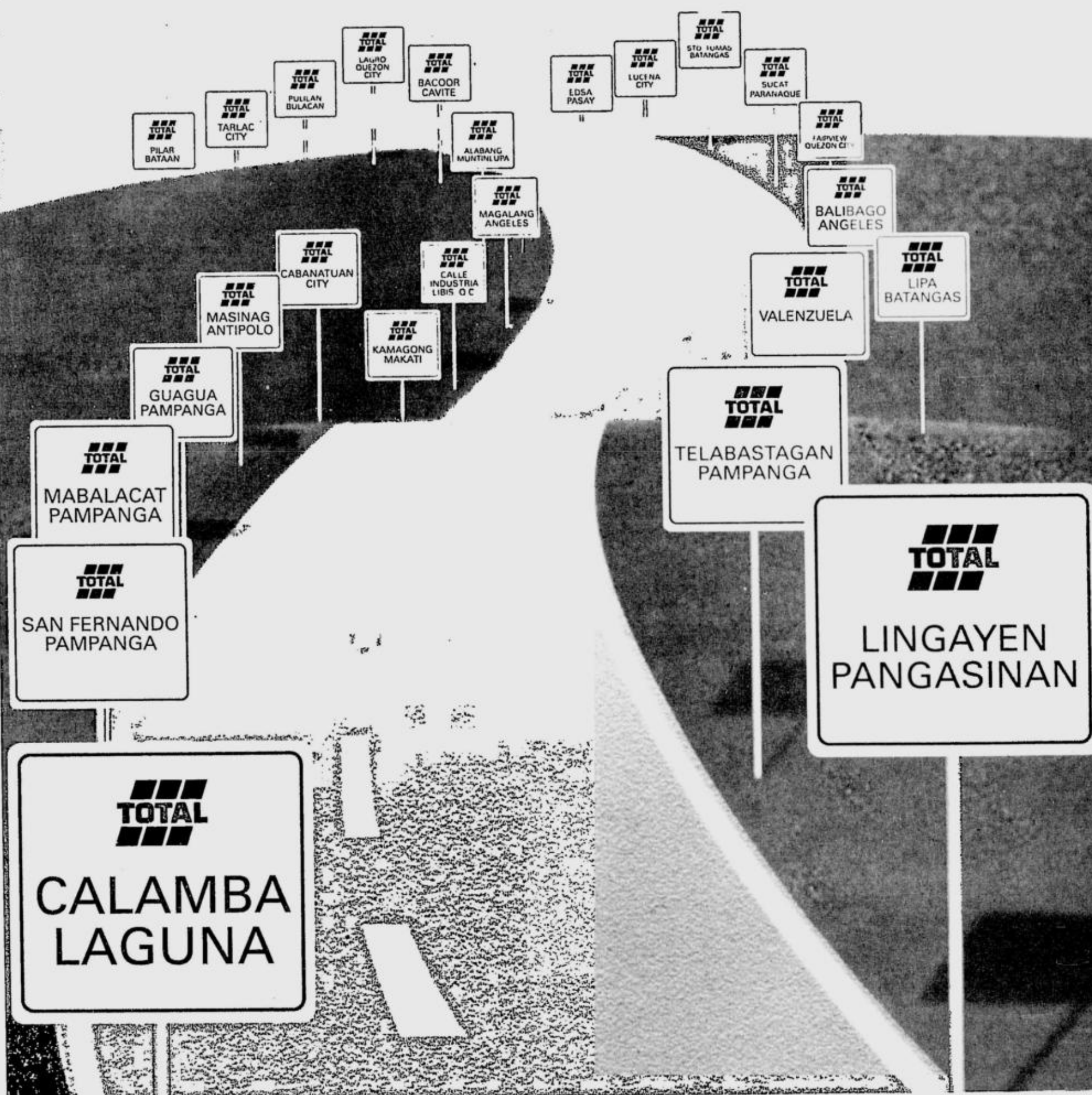
The team would look for a one-hectare government lot with an adequate supply of water for the proposed mango plantation.

Dicang said each Cordillera province is entitled to 400 mango seedlings.

"The government cannot provide free college education to these children because we are a poor country," he said, explaining why they thought of the project.

"There are many children in the Cordilleras who cannot go to college because of poverty," Dacawi said.

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Lipa church to enshrine Glorious Cross

ON Jan. 6, 2001, as the Christian world ends its Jubilee Year with the closing of the Holy Door of the St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the local church in Batangas province will have its own celebration with the permanent enshrinement of its Glorious Cross at the San Sebastian Cathedral in Lipa City.

The Most. Rev. Gaudencio Rosales, archbishop of Lipa, will lead the simple rites. The mood is "in keeping with the difficult times confronting us," said Msgr. Alfredo Madlangbayan, vicar general and parish priest of the San Sebastian Cathedral Parish.

The program will start at 3 p.m. upon the arrival in Lipa of the Glorious Cross that by then would have made its year-long visit to the archdiocese's 52 parishes.

It will be welcomed by 300 people dancing the "Subli," a native dance and song homage to the Holy Cross, along C.M. Recto Avenue, the city's main thoroughfare.

The Eucharistic celebration inside the cathedral would follow and be participated in by all the clergy of the archdiocese and the Lipa Archdiocesan Grand Choir.

In a special offering during Mass, priests would offer their personal reflections on the Glorious Cross.

The 52 Parish Pastoral Council presidents will also present a documentation of the visit of the Glorious Cross in their parishes—videotapes, photographs, journals, reflections of lay people on the Jubilee Year and the Glorious Cross.

The Glorious Cross, Batangas' unique symbol of the Jubilee of Redemption, is an original design of Archbishop Rosales.

It is a seven-foot, two-faced wood carving with the Holy Trinity on one side and the Holy Family on the other.

ROUNDUP

Robbers kill caretaker

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Armed men stabbed and killed a house caretaker during a robbery in Angeles City on Monday. Police identified the victim as Jose Yanga Jr., 60, caretaker of the house of Gei Dehlin, a Norwegian, at the Riverside Subdivision in Barangay Anunas in Angeles City. Reports said the suspects entered the house by destroying an air conditioning unit mount. Reports said Yanga could have fought off the suspects and this led to his killing. The suspects took P25,000 worth of appliances and personal belongings from Dehlin's house.

Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

8,100 workers lose jobs

SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—At least 8,100 workers in Central Luzon were laid off between January and November this year and labor officials said the retrenchment figures were preliminary as more companies aired uncertainties amid the peso depreciation and the impeachment trial of President Estrada. The job losses, culled from the termination reports of employers during the 11-month period in the region, were lower by 66.41 percent compared to last year's total of 24,121 retrenched workers, labor figures showed.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Tabaco nears cityhood

TABACO, Albay—This premier town is soon to be a city, said Mayor Alex Burce following the passage in a Senate committee of a bill converting the municipality of Tabaco into a component city of Albay. SB No. 1994, authored by Sen. Sergio Osmeña III as a counterpart measure of House Bill No. 9794 authored by Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro, passed the Senate committee on local government on Dec. 19. Luistro said the overwhelming support for the conversion of Tabaco into a component city and the speedy approval of the House and Senate bills "attest to the fact that Tabaco is indisputably ripe for cityhood."

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cop killer killed

TAYSAN, Batangas—A man who killed a policeman on Nov. 2, 1998 was killed by his victim's namesake and cousin, who happens to be also a policeman. Celedonio Arsinas Jr., 44, faces a murder case for killing SPO1 Paciano Almendras on Nov. 2, 1998. But on Dec. 28, Arsinas tried to stab another police officer, PO2 Paciano Almendras, 29, twice with a fan knife in Barangay San Guillermo, this town. Supt. Florante Baguio, Batangas police provincial director, said Almendras was able to duck and run to his uncle's house. He immediately fired a warning shot at Arsinas who was running after him. Arsinas, however, ignored him, forcing him to shoot the knife wielder who suffered 9 mm bullet wounds in the right side of his chest and left side of his neck, causing his immediate death.

Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bacolod massacre sad end of year in Visayas

BY THE PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

THE YEAR 2000 for the Visayas had a bloody ending with a massacre in the heart of Bacolod City in December.

The slayings of six members of the Rivilla family and their two housemaids briefly grabbed the limelight away from the call that rang across the Visayas for President Estrada to resign amid allegations that he took bribes from "jueteng" lords and amassed unexplained wealth.

Amid the strife and violence, the year 2000 saw how people stood up to defend their rights: Antiqueños against a plan to convert their island, Semirara, to a dump for Metro Manila's garbage.

Cebuans also put to test the Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippines and United States in two incidents involving US military personnel.

It was also a very good year for the Catholic Church with the beatification of Blessed Pedro Calungsod, a young Visayan from Cebu who was martyred defending the faith in Guam.

The heroism of one-legged triathlete Rodolfo "Rudy" Fernandez will also remain in the hearts of those whom he helped.

He rode a bicycle on Sept. 2 covering a distance of 246 kilometers from Iloilo City to Zamboanga, Capiz to raise funds for wounded soldiers and the families of those killed in the war in Mindanao.

It was a show of human resilience as early in the year, on Jan. 16, Fernandez was badly injured after a speeding L-300 van hit him while he

Their confessed killer, Bemon Gallo, 20, the Rivilla family's houseboy, was arrested 11 days later in Sagay City. Multiple murder charges have been filed against him.

'Erap Resign' movements

The call for President Estrada to resign hogged the headlines of community newspapers in key cities in the Visayas from September to December.

The conservative business sector and the elite took part in the rallies, adding a new dimension to the local anti-Estrada movement.

Like in rallies in Metro Manila, the rich and the poor marched together in the streets of Cebu, Iloilo and Bacolod. The academe and militants led similar protest actions in the cities of Roxas (Capiz), Dumaguete (Negros Oriental), Tagbilaran (Bohol), Tacloban (Leyte), Ormoc (Leyte) and Maasin (Southern Leyte); and the capital towns of Kalibo (Aklan), and Catbalogan (Western Samar).

As early as January, however, militant groups had already demanded the President's resignation amid constant increases in oil prices.

But not all Visayans are anti-Estrada. The League of Municipalities of the Philippines-Negros Occidental chapter headed by Pulupandan Mayor Antonio Suatenco came out in support of the President and the Movement for the Retention of Erap was formed.

Trial of the century

With everyone's attention riveted to the televised impeachment trial of President Estrada, Visayans are watching closely at least eleven Visayan politicians having active roles in the trial:

Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., a Cebuano, and the presiding officer in the trial; Representatives Sergio Apostol (Leyte), Antonio Nachura (Samar), Clavel Asas-Martinez (Cebu) and Raul Gonzales (Iloilo City) of the prosecution panel; former Northern Samar Rep. Raul Daza of the defense panel; and former Eastern Samar Gov. Lutgardo Barbo, the secretary of the Senate.

Then there are the senator-judges in whose hands lie the fate of the President. Four of them are Visayans: The Osmeña cousins from Cebu, John and Sergio III; and Franklin Drilon and Miriam Defensor-Santiago, both from Iloilo.

While the Visayan accent may have provided some comic relief in the trial, many Visayans are not laughing but neither are they embarrassed. Their main concern is if their *kasinaw* (provincemates) will make them proud by performing well in the trial.

VFA violations
The Visiting Forces Agreement between the Philippines and the United States was put to test last year in Cebu by two incidents involving US military personnel.

Cousins Arnel Gaviola, 13, and Rolly Navales, 17, were killed on Aug. 19 when they played with a live M-203 grenade they found in an abandoned mining site of the Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. in Barangay Don Andres Soriano, Toledo City.

The grenade was used during the war games and apparently left behind after the joint RP-US military exercise, dubbed "Flash Piston."

Local officials were even unaware of the exercises until the deaths of the two boys became news.

Elmer Cato, Visiting Forces Agreement Commission spokesman, said the RP-US Navy commanders involved in the secret games in Toledo City violated standard procedures by not coordinating with local executives.

Commodore Arthur Garrido, chief of the Philippines Navy's Naval Forces Central (Navforcent), was relieved from his post following the boy's deaths.

Eighteen US Navy SEALs took part in the exercises. They were joined by 15 Filipino Navy men from the Special Warfare Group (Swag).

One would think that the American Navy would be more careful after an incident in March that involved three American Navy servicemen.

In the evening of March 12, hours after the USS Blue Ridge docked at the Cebu International Port for a "goodwill visit" on the island, three US Navy personnel who went bar-hopping beat up a taxi driver, Marcelo Batestil, after they quarreled over P900 in taxi fare.

US Navy Petty Officers Michael Keyes, Shannon Towers and Johnny Earl Lowery Jr. were charged with slight physical injuries, estafa and malicious mischief. The three pleaded not guilty to the charges.

A month after, the case was dropped after Batestil accepted \$5,000 in compensation from the US servicemen.

The Toledo incident, however, remained a thorny issue, particularly since the Philippine Navy merely "reprimanded" their personnel for negligence.

Ruben Carranza, then defense undersecretary for plans and program and then deputy director of the VFA Commission, has strongly recommended the filing of criminal charges against the US servicemen and Philippine Navy soldiers involved in the secret war games.

Semirara garbage dump controversy

At the closing of the year, the attention of the people of Panay was focused on a small island off northwest Panay that Metro Manila wants to convert into a garbage dump.

This small island called Semirara will continue to attract attention as the man-made crater there threatens to erupt into a big environmental disaster in the coming year.

The Semirara controversy will surely overshadow other issues that rocked Panay Island in the year 2000 because the stink of garbage has a haunting effect.

Yesterday, 18 barges full of Metro Manila's garbage sailed to Semirara to start filling up the 28-hectare Panian mine pit designated as a waste receptacle.

The Metro Manila Development Authority and the consortium it hired to implement the landfill project on Semirara were apparently undaunted by

Antique Gov. Exequiel Javier's warning of a "people's blockade" if the MMDA insists on dumping its garbage on Semirara Island.

Javier said all pump boats in Antique would be deployed around Semirara to prevent the garbage barges from entering the island.

Semirara, with a land area of 5,500 hectares and a population of about 8,000, is one of the nine islands that comprise the town of Caluya. It is a six-hour pump boat ride from Culasi town, 80 km north of San Jose, Antique's capital.

Beatification of Pedro Calungsod

On March 6, Pope John Paul II beatified Pedro Calungsod together with 43 other martyrs at the Vatican.

Church bells in Cebu pealed as the Pope elevated the Visayan missionary to the first step of sainthood.

Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and First Lady Loi Estrada led the Filipino community who attended

the beatification rites at the St. Peter's Square at the Vatican.

Calungsod was killed at the age of 17 in Guam at 1672. He was a volunteer catechist who was sent to Guam by Spanish Jesuit missionaries to spread Christianity.

Aram, rebel child

The year 2000 saw the resurgence of the insurgency in the Eastern Visayas' islands of Leyte and Samar.

In March, 12-year-old rebel boy "Aram" caught the attention of national media because at his tender age he already knew how to assemble an Armalite rifle. The boy was captured in a military operation in Southern Leyte, and there was a public outcry then against the use of children in armed conflicts.

Then in June last year, the military dug up the remains of about a dozen alleged members of the New People's Army, reportedly victims of a communist purge in Baybay, Leyte.

These incidents were but reminders that the insurgency is still alive in the

region: In June 15, seven soldiers and a militiaman were killed in an ambush staged by some 50 New People's Army rebels in Barangay Libertad, Maslog, Eastern Samar. On Sept. 20, some 200 rebels swooped down on the town of Mapanas, Northern Samar. At least three civilians were killed during the attack.

Calamities

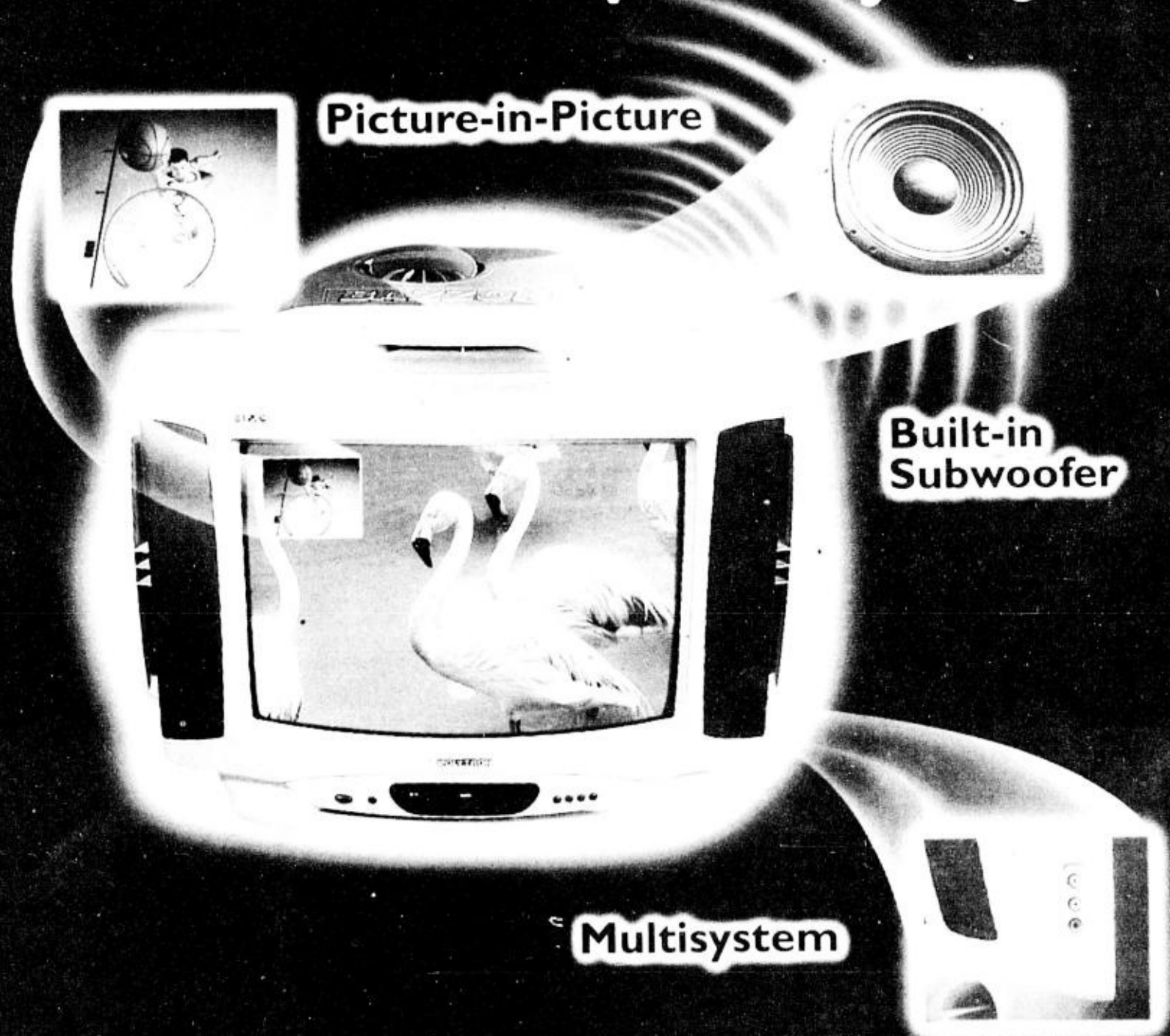
Calamities—typhoons and fires—also compounded the woes of Visayans. Tropical storms Reming, Seniang, Toyang and Ulpiang wrought havoc on the three Visayan regions late in 2000.

The series of storms were particularly devastating for Samar Island, where a dozen fishermen who went out to sea at the height of typhoon Toyang on Dec. 1 were never seen again.

In Capiz, Iloilo and Aklan, at least 13 people drowned in floodwaters brought by tropical depression Ulpiang on Dec. 7.

With reports from Carla Gomez, Nereo Lujan, Vicente Labro, Nagiel Bañacia and Edra Benedicto

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AN ARTIST'S portrayal of how Calungsod may have looked like was enough to complete the picture of his martyrdom.

was on his regular afternoon cycling routine. His arms and left leg were severely fractured. Even the upper portion of his amputated right leg was injured. His head and body suffered bruises.

It was also a show of resilience on the part of the Romualdez clan of Leyte who laid the groundwork last year to regain control of the province.

Former Leyte Gov. Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez is said to be planning to regain his old post at the Capitol. To ensure that he would attain this goal, the Romualdezes are joining forces with the Veloso-Loreto political clan.

It has been reported that the Romualdezes would field candidates in each of the five districts in Leyte, either as congressional candidates or candidates for other positions. Already, their people have been going around the province, "feeling the people's pulse."

But last year also saw the deaths of two key political figures in Negros Occidental—sugar czar and Marcos ally Roberto Benedicto, 83, who died on May 16; and former Bacolod Rep. Romeo Guanzon, 79, who died on Sept. 7.

Rivilla massacre

The massacre of six members of the Rivilla family and two of their housemaids at the Rivilla home on 24th Aguinaldo Street, Bacolod City on Dec. 17 appalled many.

The heads of the three young Rivilla boys were bashed in with a hammer, their skulls broken.

The bodies of the Rivillas and their two helpers were found sprawling in the different parts of their home.

Carlos Rivilla Jr., 76, was found hacked in the neck and head. His body lay sprawled on the kitchen floor while his wife, Florida, 75, lay dead on their bedroom floor with a hack wound in the neck.

In the dirty kitchen, their helper Dolores Ogatis, 20, lay dead with her face hacked, and in the nearby maids' quarters the cook, Ritchel Gonzales, 19, was found strangled.

The worst scene was in the room where the bodies of the Rivillas' son, Benrico, 42, and his three boys—Mark Anthony, 13; Guillermo Benrico Jr., 11; and John Michael, 9—were found. All four were naked and were possibly tortured.

Benrico, who was found in a kneeling position slumped against a bed, suffered about eight stab and hack wounds in the neck and head with one ear nearly cut off.

On the walls of the room were messages written in the victims' blood, alleging that Benrico had killed people and gotten women pregnant.

Miriam goes ballistic; 3 spectators expelled

(From page A1)

stay in their seats.

She said the three "deliberately got out of their way to provoke a judge into disturbing another senator-judge and . . . the entire impeachment proceeding."

Santiago's outburst came after Sen. Raul Roco talked to prosecution witness Ma. Jazmin Banal, 27, about the nobility of the law profession.

It was an apparent dig at Santiago who had expressed surprise that Banal, a University of the Philippines law graduate, quit a higher-paying job at the De Borja Law Office to transfer to a lower-paying job at the Romulo Mabanta Law.

(Edward Serapio, President Estrada's is a senior partner of the De Borja law firm.)

"I noticed that while Senator Roco was in effect answering the point that I was raising when I was having the floor, after he made his point, a group of spectators . . . went out of their way to stand out of their seats deliberately violating the signs, which are very clearly pasted on our walls saying 'please remain seated' just to look at me in a provocative way," Santiago said.

She then requested "senators from now on to raise their questions with the witness and not try to initiate a debate or a colloquy with their own fellow senators."

"I would believe that the very barest

essential of protocol and etiquette dictates such behavior and conduct," Santiago said.

Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the trial's presiding officer, ordered the proceedings suspended and allowed Santiago to point out to Senate pages the three who provoked Santiago's ire.

Jimenez, Abotiz and Fores were escorted to the office of Senate sergeant-at-arms Brig. Gen. Leonardo Lopez amid media frenzy.

Just being patriotic

They were kept behind closed doors for about 30 minutes before Lopez allowed journalists to talk to the three.

"Our only guilt was we're being patriotic," Abotiz said.

She said they only "moved forward and stooped" to watch the proceedings because a huge column was blocking their line of vision.

Jimenez, chair of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, said that it was not Santiago's but their rights that the senator-judge had violated.

"Even our freedom of movement (was violated). Imagine, here at the Senate itself, which represents democracy, freedom of expression and everything that's free," Jimenez said.

Jimenez also pointed out that he had "every right to witness the proceedings because he is one of the complainants in the impeachment proceedings."

The court was suspended at 3:02 p.m. and when the judges came out of

their caucus at about 4:17 p.m., Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. announced that they had decided on five points.

Pimentel said they decided to ban Jimenez, Abotiz and Fores and to enforce strictly the regulations concerning spectators and the two-minute rule for the senators.

He said the court also decided that senator-judges could speak to media but not on "substantial issues" about the trial.

The court also came out with a statement condemning threats and pressures being exerted on the members of the impeachment court.

No due process

In a press conference at Senator-Judge Teofisto Guingona's office, the three lamented that they were denied due process.

They said their side was not taken before the impeachment court decided to permanently bar them from attending the proceedings.

"We didn't do anything unruly. We're not even allowed to lean forward (to watch the proceedings)," said Abotiz.

"I was shocked. Senator Santiago first pointed to two men in gray, then looked at us," said Fores.

Jimenez also chided the public prosecutors and anti-Estrada senators, who did not do anything to help them.

"They didn't even lift a finger to help us," he said.

The court's decision was sparked

by the testimony of Banal who had talked about how the De Borja, Medialdea, Bello, Guevarra, Serapio and Herodias law office formed two dummy corporations that later on acquired the Fontana Leisure Park complex.

Agusan del Norte Rep. Roan Libarios had said that the prosecution team believed that the dummy corporations—Pio Holdings and the Alexei Holdings—were used to acquire the resort using "jueteng" funds as alleged by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Banal had said that the corporations were formed when she was still with the De Borja law office from where she resigned in June last year. She said she transferred to the Romulo, Mabanta law office in August last year.

UP grads for high pay

Santiago pointed out that lawyer Ricardo Romulo was the same one who became the head of the Equitable PCI Bank and a "leading advocate of the removal of the President."

Santiago expressed surprise when Banal revealed that she had a lower salary at Romulo's law firm.

"So you made the unusual deviation from the usual career path since you and I and all UP law graduates virtually pursue the same career path after graduation. Isn't that so? We try and get the highest salary we can get . . . if we are offered a higher salary then of course—other things being equal—the normal

reaction is to accept the higher salary," she said.

"The usual career path is for a lawyer to transfer from an office where he is already acclimated to another law office because of the incentive of a higher salary. But in your case, you deviated from that career path because according to you, you transferred from a law office with a higher salary to a law office with a lower salary, is that correct?" she asked.

Banal replied "yes" to which Santiago responded, "Remarkable!"

Roco then pointed out that the profession of law, as taught in San Beda from which he graduated, was noble.

Microphone

Osmeña said he accidentally discovered the mike during the break but did not have it removed in order to catch the owner red-handed.

He said the private conversations of the senator-judges were being picked up by the microphone, which was found on the left side of the gallery near the three rows of the senators.

Osmeña was one of those seated in the outer lanes. What followed was near commotion as senators and spectators tried to look at the mike.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III and Sen. Robert Jaworski took turns reporting that the mike was attached to the camera of GMA 7, one of the three networks allowed to cover the trial inside the session hall.

Sen. Vicente Sotto III said

microphones other than those hooked to main mixers were not authorized.

"It was placed there not to pick up the proceedings (but private conversations)," Sotto said.

On orders of Davide, Barbo identified the cameraman as Jose Canlas.

Pimentel ordered Canlas to go to the witness stand and the somewhat bewildered cameraman became an instant witness.

Canlas, who said he was GMA 7 cameraman for five months, admitted to Jaworski that the mike had been there for about a week.

He said it was placed there by audioman Bong de Guzman, and was meant to "pick up the ambience (ambient sounds)."

He said the conversations during the trial and on breaks were heard and recorded in the GMA master control outside the Senate building.

The nervous witness at one point admitted he hears many conversations.

Pimentel suggested that instead of questioning DJ Sta. Ana, news operations manager right away, he would confer with him today so as not to further disrupt the trial.

Pimentel asked that the mike be confiscated.

"This is a warning to all concerned. The impeachment court cannot be taken lightly," Davide said.

Davide said the placement of the mike could affect the dignity and integrity of the senator-judges.

Prosecution lawyers did not do homework

(From page A1)

corporations, which she claimed was organized under the direction of lawyer Edward Serapio (one of the President's private lawyers), to any of the activities related to jueteng operation, as testified earlier by Singson.

Prosecutor Rep. Roan Libarios, who conducted Banal's direct examination, appeared unsure and tentative in responding to the objections interposed by the defense when he tried to draw into the picture another corporation that, according to Singson, is a front corporation for jueteng collections.

Lowest rank

Unable to get his direct examination questions through, Libarios was forced to settle for a manifestation stating the substance of the witness' answer had she been allowed to reply to the disallowed question.

In the hierarchy of evidence in our legal system, the "offer of evidence" made by Libarios occupies the lowest rank in terms of probative value and, in a sense, almost useless to prove a fact in dispute.

The prosecution's inability to get the full measure of Banal's testimony may be attributed to its failure to adequately confer with Banal on the manner by which she would be questioned, or perhaps to a sense of complacency brought about by the publicity mileage it gained from the testimony of Clarissa Ocampo.

Pagcor

The second witness, lawyer Emily Padua of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., did not perform any different from that of Banal, as far as the interests of the prosecution are concerned.

Padua was brought to the witness stand by the prosecution to corroborate the testimony of Singson on the President's alleged scheme to put jueteng operations under the umbrella of Pagcor and re-named Bingo 2-Ball, with the President's friend Charlie "Atong" Ang doing the actual operation, to ensure the collection of bigger gambling revenues.

The principal thrust of the prosecution's direct examination was that Pagcor reduced the commission it originally planned to give to Prominent Management and Consultancy Corp. (the corporate vehicle that Ang used to operate Bingo 2-Ball) from 5 percent to 2 percent in reaction only to Singson's exposé.

But on cross-examination, Padua gave answers that tend to show that the award of the gambling project to Ang's corporation was made in the ordinary course of business of Pagcor. And that no money had yet been remitted by Pagcor to Ang in spite of the millions of pesos his corporation had collected for Pagcor during Bingo 2-Ball's initial months of operation.

Padua's belated explanation that negotiations for the reduction of the commission of Ang's company from 2 to 5 percent had been ongoing even before the Singson exposé was accepted by the prosecution without making the appropriate clarification to meet the purpose for which she was a witness for the prosecution.

Shocker

Padua's statement that the prosecution did not confer with her or examine the documents covering the award of the operation of the Bingo 2-Ball project to Ang's corporation came as a shocker.

There is nothing wrong with the prosecution talking to Padua before putting her on the witness stand.

Neither is it against lawyers' ethics to review the documents that relate to the subject of her direct testimony.

In fact, lawyers are expected to confer at length with their witnesses before any trial to make sure the answers they give would be consistent with the legal strategy the lawyers have in mind.

It is a basic rule in evidence that the testimony of a person whom a party has presented to the court as its witness shall be binding on that party. Unless the witness turns out to be adverse or hostile witness in the course of the trial, in which case the party who put him at the witness stand may ask that his testimony be treated differently.

Senators save day

Some senator-judges saved the day for the prosecution. Through their questions, Padua admitted that the contract for the operation of Bingo 2-Ball was awarded to Ang's corporation without the benefit of a public bidding.

She also confirmed that the collections made by Ang's corporation on behalf of Pagcor, which partake of the nature of public funds, were deposited in the corporation's account which is contrary to existing rules on the handling of public funds.

Through the answers that Padua made upon the questioning of the senator-judges, and those that she may make when she takes the witness stand again today, the corroboration of Singson's testimony that the prosecution sought to achieve through Padua may after all be accomplished.

Sensitive

The otherwise boring proceedings yesterday were livened by Sen. Miriam Santiago's umbrage about some spectators whom she accused of giving her "provocative looks."

She also complained about the

questions posed by Sen. Raul Roco on lawyer Ma. Jazmin Banal which tended to put her in a bad light.

When the senator-judges returned after an hourlong caucus to attend to Santiago's complaint, the members of the audience whom she said committed disorderly acts against her person were promptly ejected from the premises and barred from future attendance at the trial.

That the Senate has the inherent duty to maintain order in its chamber is not in dispute. The rules of behavior in parliamentary assemblies must be complied with by those who enter them.

Unfortunately, there seems to be an element of arbitrariness in the manner by which the spectators concerned were found guilty of direct contempt by the impeachment court. There was no effort to verify the spectators' claim that the reason they leaned toward Santiago's direction was because their view was blocked by a big post.

The tapes that could have shown the exact position of the spectators in relation to the post in question were not reviewed. The impeachment court took the word of Santiago at its face value.

If decorum and discipline are considered strict rules of behavior during the impeachment trial, why were the senator-judges quiet when Santiago called the legal counsel of the House of Representatives a "creature," or used disparaging words in questioning an Equitable PCI Bank manager who exhibited a photographic memory, or peppered her statements with sarcastic words aimed at putting down witnesses?

The people whose taxes make it possible for senators to enjoy the perks and privileges of their office are also entitled to a modicum of respect from their representatives.

Capulong said Mendoza, Chua and Lazaro were guilty of obstruction of justice for trying to cover up the President's alleged secret bank accounts and transactions.

"These were serious acts of misconduct and impropriety. They are officers of the (impeachment) court, particularly Mendoza," Capulong said.

The prosecution panel said the Equitable PCI Bank account proves President Estrada is liable for graft and corruption for amassing ill-gotten wealth.

Capulong said: "Mendoza's defense is preposterous and incredible. Who would believe it? (In doing so) he insulted our intelligence," he said.

He added: "There were three people who were central to the bank account of President Estrada. They were all there (at Mendoza's office) at the same time."

Other groups had earlier called for Mendoza's disbarment for alleged impropriety and violation of ethical standards of the legal profession for allowing the signing of the documents at his office.

to oust him, Romulo said this "exists only in his mind."

"It is just coincidental that I happen to be simultaneously the chair of both Equitable PCI Bank and MBC at this time," Romulo said in a statement he issued yesterday.

He added: "I must stress that I have been associated with the Go family (the bank's owners) for over 25 years as a director and vice chair of the bank. In fact, my family's ties with the Go family date back to my father, the late Gen. Carlos P. Romulo. Very recently, I accepted the chairmanship of Equitable PCI Bank upon the request of the Go family."

"As chair of the country's third largest bank, my responsibility is single-minded: to steer Equitable PCI Bank in these challenging and trying times."

Romulo also pointed out that the testimony of prosecution witness Clarissa Ocampo, a senior vice president of the bank, "resulted from a subpoena issued by the impeachment court," and that the documents and events she presented and described predated his assumption of the

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decided to permanently bar them from attending the proceedings.

Lim offered the three IBP's free legal services should they wish to go to court to assert their right to attend the impeachment hearings.

The Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) lashed out at Santiago for "terrorizing citizens who are merely watching the Senate impeachment proceedings."

"These are taxpayers Santiago is attacking. Her post as senator-judge gives her no right to prevent anyone, even invoking personal privilege, from watching and reacting to the proceedings," the TUCP said in a statement.

"Assuming that they stood up in the course of listening to the debates, it does not constitute any illegal act, unless Santiago wants a gag order on everyone observing the proceedings," the group said.

She's cracking up

The TUCP said that Santiago's actions showed that she could no longer contain her emotions.

"From the looks of it the case is too hot for her to handle. She's cracking up. Maybe this is a good time for her to inhibit herself," it said.

For its part, Sanlakas said it was Santiago who should be held in contempt of court.

"It is her antics and pranks that derail and disturb the impeachment proceedings," Sanlakas said in a statement.

The group said Santiago "does not deserve to wear a robe over her dress but a bayong over her head for it seems she does not like people to stare at her."

"After singling out selected members of the audience whom she claimed to have intimidated her, we are sure a bayong is most apt for Miriam, who is better at being a *Makapili* than a judge is. She is truly a *Makapili-in-robos*," Sanlakas said.

"For Miriam, it is *pera* at bayong: Anyway, lawyering for her is *pera-pera lang*," the group added.

IBP president Lim said Santiago's tirade was utterly regrettable and should not be taken as reflective of the professional behavior of UP Law graduates.

Under questioning by Santiago, prosecution witness Jasmine Banal stated that from the De Borja Law Office where she had a higher salary, she transferred to a lower-paying job at Romulo Mabanta Law Office.

Usual career path

Santiago told the witness that this was not the "usual career path" of a UP Law graduate, who goes from a lower-paying job to a higher-

paying job.

Lim said Senator-Judge Raul Roco was correct in clarifying that "law is not a business but a noble profession (which it really is), and therefore, it was not necessarily a bad career decision for Banal to have transferred to Romulo Mabanta Law Office."

Sanlakas said a case could be made to disbar Santiago, a lawyer.

"Her idea of counseling is huckstering. For Miriam, being a lawyer is not so much a noble profession where justice is supreme as a base career where money is the first priority," the group said.

Courage, a group of government employees, called on the Senate to reprimand Santiago as she had humiliated Jimenez, Abotiz and Pores and violated their rights.

"Without giving them the benefit to state their side, she accused them before the public watching the trial and even asked for their names and addresses as if what they did were criminal acts," Courage president Ferdi Gaité said in a statement.

Gaité said Santiago was clearly irked by Roco's line of questioning directed at Banal, but instead directed her ire against the unsuspecting three.

"It is sickening for Santiago to make sweeping statements and to liken every lawyer to opportunists like her when she said that 'the correct part for Banal and other lawyers should have been to look for higher-paying firms, regardless of the integrity of the work involved,'" Gaité said.

Gomburza, a national association of militant priests and pastors, described Santiago as "onion-skinned."

"Thank God, she was not elected president, for if she had been, God help the Filipinos," said Fr. Raul Enriquez, Gomburza spokesperson.

Private prosecutor Romeo Capulong of the Public Interest Law Center said the proceedings had turned "farfical."

Capulong said he would be seeking a meeting among the 24 complainants in the impeachment case and the House and private prosecutors to discuss if there was still enough reason to go on with the proceedings.

"We are very seriously considering withdrawing (as private prosecutor) from the complaint," Capulong said.

But Capulong said that before mulling over the withdrawal from the impeachment complaint, they would file a motion for reconsideration and ask the court to "review the tape and review what Senator Santiago said." With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Lawyers want Mendoza disbarred

(From page A1)

Romeo Capulong, a private lawyer assisting the prosecution panel in the President's Senate impeachment trial, said the three groups met Wednesday night and also agreed to file similar petitions against lawyers Fernando Chua and Manuel Lazaro.

Mendoza is one of the President's defense lawyers, Chua the President's personal lawyer, and Lazaro the lawyer of businessman Jaime Dichaves.

Capulong said the Organization of United Solicitors for Truth and Estrada's Resignation (Ouster), the Caucus of Lawyers for Estrada's Abrupt Resignation (Clear) and the Concerned Lawyers for Moral and Effective Leadership (Clamor) plan to file their petition with the Supreme Court on Monday.

"We believe the three (Mendoza, Chua and Lazaro) conspired with one another to suppress evidence against the President," said Capulong, who heads the three lawyers' groups.

Clarissa G. Ocampo, Equitable PCI Bank senior vice president, had told the impeachment court on Tuesday about an attempt to hide the President's ownership of the P500-million "Jose Velarde" trust account by transferring it to Dichaves.

Ocampo testified that Dichaves signed the documents transferring the account to himself at Mendoza's office in Makati City on Dec. 13.

The documents were backdated to Feb. 4, 2000, the same day Ocampo said she saw President Estrada sign the name "Jose Velarde" to a similar set of documents related to the trust account.

Ocampo, however, said the transfer fell through after the President failed to forward the letter of authority assigning the account to Dichaves.

Ocampo also testified that Chua told her "to protect the President" in the first week of December, after he showed up at her office unannounced and long before she took the witness stand.

Dichaves, on the other hand, wrote the impeachment court claiming that he owned the "Jose Velarde" account from

which a P142-million check was issued to buy the "Boracay mansion" allegedly belonging to the President.

Capulong said the petition had been endorsed by his fellow private prosecutors who would seek Mendoza's perpetual disqualification from the practice of law.

Capulong said Mendoza "insulted our intelligence" when he dissociated himself from the meeting that took place at his office between Equitable PCI Bank's former chair, George Go, and Dichaves on Dec. 13.

Mendoza claimed he had no knowledge of or participation in the signing of the documents. He said Dichaves and Go asked to use his office to discuss some matters. He said he was not aware that they would be signing anything.

Go said the transfer was not consummated because Dichaves "never produced the letter-authority from the principal, Mr. Jose Velarde, as required by Equitable PCI Bank."

The prosecution panel maintains that the Velarde account belongs to the President.

Where are the President's men?

(From page A1)

As in the past, Caloocan Mayor Rey Malonzo, whom Malacañang had suspended earlier, was not among the local officials who welcomed Mr. Estrada.

But Caloocan Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio, a longtime buddy of Mr. Estrada and whom he acknowledged as his "true friend," was around.

Asked later why the Cabinet members were conspicuously absent, Acting Press Secretary Mike Toledo said they could have been working or had other engagements to fulfill.

Asked why he himself was not in attendance, Toledo said he was at the time working in Malacañang.

Rice

The President launched the rice distribution program, "Bigas para sa Masa (BiMa)," in Bagong Silang, Caloocan.

He distributed to poor residents BiMa "passbooks" that would give them priority in the distribution of cheap but high-quality rice.

The program targets 20 of the poorest provinces nationwide but will initially be

implemented in Metro Manila, Metro Cebu and Metro Davao.

In all, the President said, 200,000 families would benefit from the program.

The ceremony was supposed to have begun at 10 a.m., but Mr. Estrada arrived at around 11:30 a.m.

His audience of about 600 started waiting for him at 9 a.m.

'Peninsulares'

But it was not only rice distribution that was discussed during the visit.

The President again took the occasion to assail his critics, particularly the Makati Business Club (MBC) and its chair, lawyer Ricardo Romulo, who now also chairs Equitable PCI Bank.

Reiterating his statement Wednesday, he told his audience that the MBC was conspiring to get him out of office, and referred to his critics as the "peninsulares in Makati."

"They don't want me to succeed because they know that I am prioritizing the poor in my programs," he said.

The President also pointed out Romulo's connection to the Romulo Mabanta law office, which is assisting

the House prosecutors in the impeachment trial.

He said this link showed that the MBC and its members were united in the effort "para ibagsak si Erap (to topple Erap)."

"They're helping one another out," Mr. Estrada said in Filipino. "This is what is called conspiracy. They are using all means possible. They are telling the witnesses to retract. They are frightening the senator-judges. They are holding rallies in front of the senators' houses to pressure them into voting against me."

He also said those leading the opposition were "losers" whom he had defeated in the past and would defeat again.

But in the end, Mr. Estrada softened his usual tirade against the rich.

"Not all of the rich are heartless," he said. "There are rich people, businessmen, who are also helping the government and the poor people. We also need them. Let us help each other."

Coincidence

Reacting to Mr. Estrada's Wednesday statement that the MBC and Equitable PCI Bank were engaged in a "conspiracy"

Richest and longest cockfighting event slated

AN intense regional war is brewing on the horizon as history's richest, biggest and longest cockfighting event, the forthcoming "10M Rolygon 11th Anniversary 7-Cock Derby," nears.

The long-silent Zamboanga breeders are set to launch a much-awaited comeback with the newly formed Zamboanga Breeders Association fielding a total of eight entries as reported by its President, Bobby Fernandez.

The chavacanos are also composed of Boy Primallion, Manny Dalipe, Toto Kaquilala, Jun Pe and lawyer Ascarranga.

First to confirm their participation are the Cagayan de Oro-Bukidnon team led by Butchoy Ang & Rolly Mercado; the Panay Island group bannered by Mayor Frankie Locsin, Emilio Poblador and Jessie Ledesma; the Cebu squad headed by Lope Dorado and the Bacolod City-Negros team with Boy Nilo Lizares and Al Velez.

Entries continue to pour in with the first and second day of elimination already fully booked.

Early birds include physicians Dictado and Noel Diasanta, Larry Carino, Boy Vasquez, Ronnie Lao, Mario Medina, Jaime Cobangco, AUT Farm, Jun Cucueco, Anthony Garcia, Leo Sanga, Bonifacio Gomez, Rolly Liboro, Enrique Go, Buddy Robregado, Bebot Lasala, Bobby del Rosario, Dennis Roldan, Nono Mitra, Boy Limson, Larry Barbasa, Benjie Ledesma, Joe Lacson, Ty brothers, Mel Crisanto, Jose Laurel, Eddie Sioson and Chet Cuneta.

Set for Jan. 16 to Feb. 15, the "big fight" is a

special presentation of Rolly Ligon in cooperation with Thunderbird Power Feeds and San Miguel Beer.

In addition to the record-breaking prize purse, the event offers a brand-new 4-door Toyota RAV-4 bonus for

the owner of the champion entry, while the top handler turns into an instant millionaire with the P1,000,000 handler's

prize at stake. Entry is pegged at only P16,500, with the minimum bet pegged at only P5,500.

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430198 117036 546921 478443 464728

Professional Camera Bag:
106596 373938 214819 457454 316946 141714 367492
330601 350533 239869 295460 275861 630062 127051
497193 300493 433760 310059 479924 689902 295205
256214 322606 184539 466382 270005 345634 215147
259302 472825 571494 253294 303546 446948 490312
379522 345918 326196 539670 358403 387916 344523
485475 428236 485389 241854 483144 270595 519187
222309

Photographer's Vests:
235203 194739 379019 288830 240915 438903 357613
416417 267250 173252 295586 486889 245481 516099
253030 352273 251458 602585 174315 374082 331397
580817 361265 385475 228813 226040 476977 352893
440852 253695 497280 639102 577159 341951 347758
235074 463619 330821 456220 463037 689954 230808
483626 235353 269703 531433 341585 322316 285197
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Solid Gold T-Shirt w/ collar:
230809 390838 465385 390794 346996 336087 340349
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685253 299703 373407 442557 220550 120110 510438
282722 296795 196814 317599 218332 364842 293171
297861 307552 524799 398825 169107 305929 642410
489060 171086 465522 264045 260815 211054 211680
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0831, Series of 2000

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 1) 5 units of Alcatel Talk & Text 3) 5 units of Motorola T-2288 5) 5 units of Panasonic GD-30
 2) 5 units of Mitsubishi Trium 4) 5 units of Nokia 5110 6) 5 units of Nokia 3210

CONSOLATION PRIZES: 100 Professional Camera Bag, 100 Photographer's vest, 100 Solid Gold T-Shirt with collar

Drawing of winning combinations to be witnessed by the DTI representative to be held at the office of Solid Triangle Sales Corporation.

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WORLD MATCH PLAY

Els, Leonard advance; Singh out

2 major boxing tilts set

THE AMATEUR Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap) starts its buildup for the Southeast Asian Games early with a dual meet with Australian boxers while laying the groundwork for the resumption of the weekly amateur boxing competitions on wheels, the 2001 edition of the Go for Gold.

Manny Lopez, Abap president, said that the box-off with the Australians will be held next month while the Go for Gold will start tentatively on Jan. 18.

"In our efforts to scout for new talents, we are reviving the Go for Gold after two years of hibernation. The association has also embarked on the SEA Games buildup with the dual meet featuring the top boxers of both countries' Team B," Lopez said.

Lopez said that the Abap and Grant Peters, secretary general of the Amateur Boxing Australia Inc., have finalized preparations for the dual meet on the first week of February.

Lopez added that under the arrangements, the Australians will come to Manila first and this will be reciprocated by the Abap by sending the Filipinos to Australia sometime in June.

The two-day "RP-Australia Box-Off" will have competitions in the pinweight (45 kg), flyweight (51 kg), bantamweight (54 kg), featherweight (57 kg), lightweight (60 kg), light welterweight (63.5 kg), welterweight (67 kg), light middleweight (71 kg), and light heavyweight (81 kg) divisions.

As to the Go for Gold, Lopez announced that the tournament is expected to attract all the amateur boxing clubs in the country. He added that the tournament will be shown on PTV Channel 4 every Thursday starting 10 p.m.



SINGH throws his putter in the air after missing a putt in the 17th hole during his match against Taniguchi, who won, 1 up.

MELBOURNE, Australia—Justin Leonard made a stunning escape to stay alive in golf's Match Play Championship on Thursday, beating Gary Orr of Scotland on a day with bizarre twists and an unlikely departure.

Vijay Singh became the second top seed to get eliminated, as Toru Taniguchi built a 4-up lead at the turn and hung on for a 1-up victory over the Masters champion and No. 3 seed.

Only five of the top 16 seeds were still alive, including Leonard and Ernie Els.

"It's hard to stay on your game for six rounds," Leonard said. "I was lucky."

Steve Stricker and Craig Stadler felt that way, even though they played great. Both are in the 90s in the world ranking, never dreamed of getting in the tournament a month ago, and now are in the final 16 of the US \$ 5 million event.

Ditto for Nick O'Hern of Australia, the 103rd-ranked player who has advanced farther in the Match Play Championship than Colin Montgomerie ever has.

Leonard had no reason to think he would be there much longer.

On a stifling hot day at Metropolitan Golf Club, Leonard appeared to be toast. He was 1-down to Orr on the 16th hole and so far into the bushes on the left that he had to play out backhanded with his putter just to get to the rough.

Then, he flared his approach to the right and pitched to a foot for a bogey.

Orr was sitting pretty in the fairway, but then collapsed. He pulled his approach into the bunker, skulled it out of thin sand across the green into another bunker, and failed to get-up-and-down, taking double bogey.

Instead of being dormie, Leonard was all square, and he jumped on the opportunity by winning the 17th. Then came more dramatics.

Orr made a 15-foot putt on the last, and Leonard missed from 6 feet to force extra holes. Leonard missed another 6-footer that would have closed out the match.

"I started to think it wasn't meant to be," he said.

But Orr hit into the bunker on the 20th hole and had made bogey to

lose. "I have to play a lot better the rest of the week if I want to continue," Leonard said.

Els, the No. 1 seed, also needed a comeback after falling behind three holes after four were played. He finally shook off some jet lag to put away Hidemichi Tanaka on the 18th, 1-up, but it left him breathing heavily.

With a 1-up lead on the 17th, Tanaka was in the trees twice and had 75 feet left for par, while Els looked like he needed only a two-putt to win. But the diminutive Japanese star rammed home the putt, and Els had to hang on for dear life.

"I couldn't believe it," Els said. "Walking to the 18th tee, I thought maybe he was destined to win this golf tournament."

Els hit a 5-iron into 9 feet on the 18th, but Tanaka wouldn't quit. He hit his approach to 10 feet, then narrowly missed the birdie.

Next up for Els is Jean Van de Velde, another great putter capable of making them from everywhere.

"I should be used to the shock by now," Els said.

At least Els' match had a happy ending. PGA Championship runner-up Bob May figured to easily advance until Shigeki Maruyama dropped in a mammoth putt on the 18th to force extra holes, then won on the 22nd to advance.

Stadler's round wasn't nearly that dramatic.

The Walrus, No. 92 in the world and the 57th seed in the 64-man field, put an end to Craig Parry's heroics in Melbourne, defeating the Australian 7 and 6 to tie the largest margin of victory in the three-year history of the tournament.

Stricker, ranked 90th, once again played like the promising young star from a couple of years ago, using a hot putter to beat Scott Verplank 3 and 2.

Tom Lehman, the No. 4 seed, never trailed and defeated Jeff Sluman, 3 and 2. AP.

S. African netters to test Swiss mettle

PERTH, Australia—South Africa will play Switzerland for a place in the final of the Hopman Cup team tennis event Friday after defeating Thailand on Thursday in a repeat of last year's final.

The tie was decided by the mixed doubles, after Paradorn Srichaphan claimed an upset 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 victory over Wayne Ferreira. Amanda Coetzer had earlier beaten Tamarine Tanasugarn 6-4, 6-4 to put the defending champions in front, and she then joined with Ferreira to beat the Thai pair 6-4, 6-1.

Ferreira has not had the best of starts to the new season, following up a straight-sets defeat by Richard Fromberg with a further loss at the hands of Srichaphan.

The South African called for medical assistance for blisters on his right foot before the match even got underway, and that may have explained his sluggish start as the Thai player claimed an early break to lead 2-0 and then held off two break points in the next game.

Ferreira nosed in front in the second set, breaking for 3-1, but Srichaphan refused to fold and held five break points to get back on level terms before Ferreira took the second set with another break.

In the deciding set, Srichaphan struck a fine crosscourt forehand winner to break for 3-2, but was then broken to love when he served for victory at 5-4.

Rather than concede, Srichaphan reacted to that disappointment by breaking again to lead 6-5 and this time closed out the match.

"It's my best win," said Srichaphan. "When I lost the second set I told my-

self there was one more set to play and to try my best."

"I kind of lost my concentration on my serve (at 5-4), but managed to break him back."

Coetzer had earlier withstood a plucky challenge from Tanasugarn. Although the South African appeared to be in charge when she led 5-2, Tanasugarn played some finely angled groundstrokes to pull back into contention and hold a point to level at 5-5.

Coetzer survived that comeback, and had to battle again after breaking Tanasugarn twice to lead 3-0 in the second set. The Thai broke back in the fourth game and again to level at 4-4, but Coetzer won the next game and served out for victory.

"My concentration fluctuated and Tamarine doesn't give you a lot of rhythm," said Coetzer. "She enjoys playing me and she's a tough competitor, and she plays better when she's behind and really goes for her shots."

The Hopman Cup consists of eight teams, split into two groups. Each team plays three rounds consisting of two singles and a mixed doubles, and the winners of each group will compete in Saturday's final.

In Thursday's evening matches, the United States will take on Belgium, needing to win just one of their three matches to advance to the final, and Russia will play Slovakia.

In the last of the round-robin matches on Friday, Switzerland will play South Africa and Australia plays Thailand. AP

Tennis officials mum on security blunder

PERTH, Australia—Hopman Cup officials said Thursday they would not take responsibility for a potentially dangerous security gaffe which saw an autograph seeker approach and tap Monica Seles on the shoulder.

Seles had been sitting courtside after her mixed doubles match on Wednesday night against Russia at the Burswood Dome when she was approached from behind by the middle-aged man.

He had walked unchallenged across a four-meter (14-foot) gap between the public stands and the players' courtside seats before being whisked away by security.

Witnesses said Seles, who was stabbed in the back while sitting

courtside in 1993 at Hamburg, Germany, was visibly upset by the approach and immediately grabbed her playing partner Jan Michael Gambill, who ushered her from the scene. There were conflicting reports as to whether she had given the man her autograph before leaving the area.

The attack by German Guntar Parche forced Seles, the leading women's tennis player in the world at the time, out of the game for more than two years.

Hopman Cup director Paul McNamee on Thursday referred questions on security arrangements to the Burswood facility management, saying security for the tournament was controlled by Burswood. AP

SANTA BARBARA, California—One of three criminal charges against boxer Fernando Vargas might be dropped in the wake of a recanted statement to a police detective, a deputy district attorney said Wednesday. Hilary Dozer said he was uncertain as to when a decision would be made concerning the count relating to Arria. AP

Tiger dyes hair blonde for fun

MIAMI—Now Tiger Woods has something else in common with the Golden Bear—golden hair.

Like Jack Nicklaus, he's a blond. "In the islands, I got a little bit of sun—it bleached my hair," Woods joked from the sideline of the Orange Bowl.

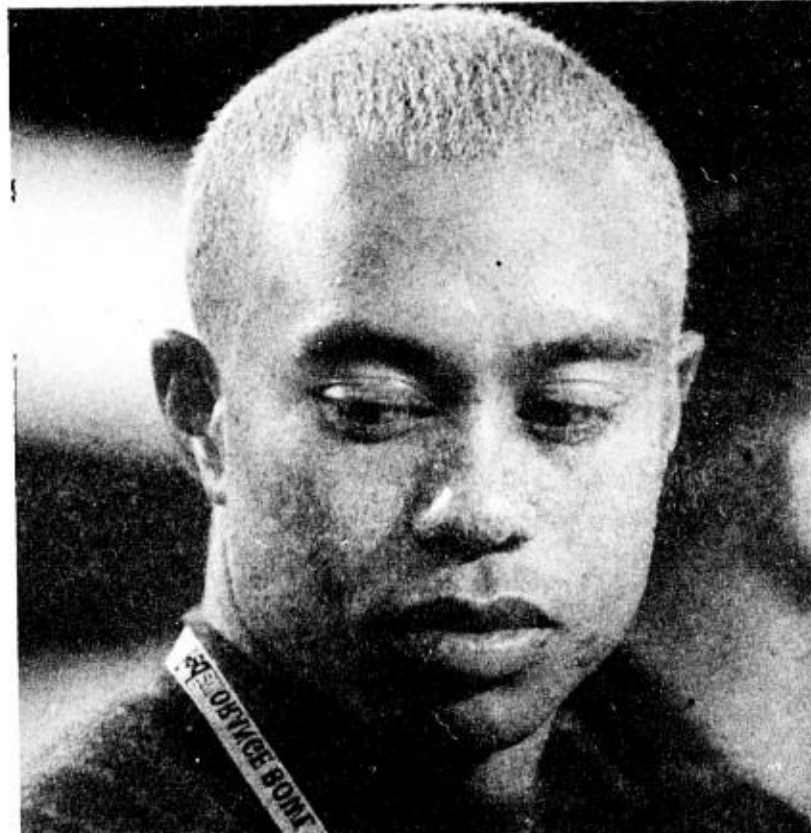
But his agent, Mark Steinberg, said Woods decided to dye his hair as part of "just a little holiday fun."

Woods apparently doesn't intend to

keep his hair that color. "I imagine it will be back to normal when he gets to the Mercedes Championships" next week in Maui, Steinberg said.

"This was not a publicity stunt," the agent said. "He was just doing it for fun with family and some friends."

Woods watched the game between Florida State and Oklahoma with Texas Rangers shortstop Alex Rodriguez. AP



WOODS: "I got a little bit of sun."

Oklahoma rips Florida in Orange Bowl, 13-2

MIAMI—A smothering defense shut down Florida State and Josh Heupel generated enough offense to give No. 1 Oklahoma a startling 13-2 victory in the Orange Bowl on Wednesday night and its first national college football title in 15 years.

"To be honest with you, we fully expected to play that way," said Sooners coach Bob Stoops, whose team was a 10 1/2-point underdog. "And as a team, we expected to win."

Oklahoma (13-0) completed a perfect season and made the issue of a split national title a moot point.

Finishing as the nation's only unbeaten team, the Sooners were automatically crowned national champs in the coaches' poll under the Bowl Championship Series format.

Oklahoma awaited The Associated Press media poll's release early Thursday, confirming the Sooners as undisputed champs.

"Our players recognize that the history of Oklahoma is winning championships," Stoops said. "We already had six, now we have seven. We have a great history in the Orange Bowl." AP

To be blunt about being blonde

BLONDE is really in these days, fellas. Look, even Tiger Woods has joined the craze.

"Just a little holiday fun," Tiger said in explaining why he had hair dyed blonde. He said that he went "to the island, and I got a little bit of sun—it bleached my hair."

Most were shocked when they saw Dennis Rodman, the NBA's certified bad man for years, dye his hair blonde some years back. We called Rodman names then. A cuckoo. A jerk. A head case. Little did we know that Rodman had started a trend. Little did we know that Rodman would not only change the mood of the times but also the mode of the locks.

Don't just comb that hair. Dye it blonde. Don't just "gel" that hair. Dye it blonde. Over here, many followed suit and soon, blonde hair became a common sight.

To be blunt about it, will I be blonde, too? I will. But I guess I'll do that only if I see my idol do it first.

And who is my idol? "Chop it," bebe. If you know what I mean.

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza



Pro or not a pro? That is the question.

With the stunning ruling by the Games and Amusements Board that the Philippine Basketball League is a pro loop, what's in store now for the country's supposed No. 1 amateur cagefest?

Look, many teams in the ongoing PBL cagefest are purely amateur, like the Ateneo Blue Eagles and the Osaka squad composed by the nucleus of the UAAP champion La Salle Green Archers.

PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad said they would fight the GAB ruling.

"We stand on solid grounds," said Chino. "Our

lawyers know what to do."

My question is, does GAB have the power to declare a league pro?

If so, what are the parameters used before GAB came up with the monumental ruling?

Is due process part of the parameters? I mean, did GAB hold a hearing, with PBL officials arguing their case against GAB's stand that the league is pro?

Some clarifications are, indeed, needed, your honor.

The decision to hire Derrick Pumaren as Tandayay coach was by far the best decision ever made by Tandayay management since it decided to stop defending the case of disgraced Fil-Am Sonny Alvarado.

Surely, collaring Pumaren was the year's first legitimate coup de grace for Tandayay Gold. The name Pumaren always spelled dignity. It smelled of a bouquet of "basketball roses."

I agree with Bong Tan: A fresh mandate is what Tandayay needs after the team had to absorb two fruitless seasons despite having a formidable lineup since its return to the PBA in 1999.

Here's a glass to you, Bong.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. Miss New York 2. Midnight Caper 3. Hush Hush 4. Vinta's Pride
Race 2—1. College Gem 2. Foolish Heart 3. Gifted Guest
Race 3—1. Sir Olizon 2. Ground Fighter/Full Blast 3. St. Emilion 4. Earth Angel
Race 4—1. Mardi Gras 2. Always 3. Decathlete 4. Loaded
Race 5—1. Sparkling Sky 2. Good

Grace 3. Bullhorn
Race 6—1. Lorna 2. Kay Rufina/Irish Star 3. Royal Worship 4. Secret Quest
Race 7—1. Snowy Market 2. Best of Ocean 3. S'il Vous Plait 4. Food Security
Race 8—1. Top Quest 2. Extraordinaire 3. Summer Dreams 4. Dragon Strike
Race 9—1. Au Rapid 2. Privately Owned 3. Bullitt Express 4. Noble Heart

Handwriting on the wall

FILIPINO athletes, ill-trained and ill-equipped, will not be making much impact in the Southeast Asian Games in Kuala Lumpur this September. That's for sure.

Of course, the athletes are not to blame for their sorry state, but I'm blaming their narrow-minded officials who are always fighting, lacking the foresight to cope with the modern times and doing nothing to lift their spirits.

"Most sports officials," a reader once wrote, "treat international and regional meets (such as the Olympics, Asian and SEA Games) as fiestas, a season for junkets and sight-seeing. It is a pity that no matter what we do everything will be put to waste if there is no change in attitude."

In his candid observation, the reader also said, "We spend millions yet our sports leaders have no clear-cut programs and directions. We terribly lack the strong discipline of our neighbors like Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. If we will not wake up Vietnam and other countries will finally overtake us."

Similarly, former Philippine Olympic Committee president Julian Malonzo said, "Sports leaders who are joining the delegation at taxpayers' expense should stay home and save precious dollars." Malonzo added only deserving athletes should be sent to international meets.

Speaking of deserving athletes, Philippine Sports Commission chair Carlos "Butch" Tuason has proposed no less than a silver-medal finish from the previous SEA Games as the criteria in the selection of athletes for this year's Kuala Lumpur meet. Two years ago in Brunei, the Philippines finished a dismal fifth in the meet won by Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore followed in that order.

That Brunei campaign was a big letdown for the nation. Filipino officials, including the now embarrased President Estrada, were embarrassed that tiny Singapore, with only about four million people, outclassed the Philippines, with a population of close to 75 million.

"Very poor. It's very unfortu-

CLEAN
LIVING



Manolo R.
Iñigo

nate," said Mr. Estrada of the Brunei Games campaign.

No wonder Tuason is now battling for stiffer standards in choosing the athletes that will carry the colors in Kuala Lumpur. "The Filipino people themselves will be happy to see better results," the PSC boss said. "We won't let this (embarrassment) happen again."

Over the years, there is a clear pattern of declining performances by Filipino athletes in the biennial sportsfest. From an awe-inspiring second-place finish in Manila in 1991, the Philippines landed third overall in Singapore in 1993 and in Thailand in 1995, dropping to fourth in Indonesia in 1997 and then finishing a dismal fifth in Brunei.

In the past, Filipino athletes were a dominant force in Asian sports. Not anymore. The Philippines is now a wash-up because many sports leaders lack delicadeza, genuine concern and transparency. As a result, they have lost the respect of the athletes and the trust of the public and the few remaining sponsors as well. Philippine sports will continue to deteriorate for as long as this rotten sports system exists.

SPORTS TRIVIA. The SEA Games (then known as the Southeast Asian Peninsular Games) were first held in Bangkok in 1959. Hosting the biennial games is rotated among member countries without the intensity and lobbying that normally accompany the selection of host for the Asian and Olympic Games.

The fabled Elma Muros-Pasadas won her eighth straight long jump gold medal in the 1999 Brunei Games, setting an unprecedented record in SEA Games history.

PBL CHALLENGE

Osaka stalls Ateneo, 66-59

BY DENNIS EROA

STANDINGS	W	L
Shark	8	2
Welcoat	7	3
Montaña	6	4
Blu Sun Power	6	4
Hapee	5	5
Ateneo-Pioneer	4	6
Ana Freezer	4	6
Osaka	3	7
PharmaQuick	2	8

Games Tomorrow

(Makati Coliseum)
2 p.m.—Letran vs Spring Oil (PYBL)
4 p.m.—Ana Freezer vs Ateneo-Pioneer

OSAKA Iridology essayed the spoiler's role perfectly with a stunning 66-59 triumph over Ateneo-Pioneer last night in the final day of PBL Challenge Cup eliminations at the Makati Coliseum.

Sniper Alvin Castro, Ronald Cuan, Manny Ramos and Willie Wilson shone as Osaka concluded its campaign on a winning note, while preventing Ateneo-Pioneer from winning an outright semis slate.

Ateneo-Pioneer now faces an awesome task in order to make the six-team semis slate. The Blue Eagles must prevail over the Ana Freezer Specialists in their do-or-die encounter tomorrow at 4 p.m.

Osaka finished with a 3-7 card, better only than the 2-8 mark of PharmaQuick. Ateneo-Pioneer and Ana Freezer finished the elims with identical 4-6 records.

A slam dunk by the 6-foot-6 Ramos gave Osaka a 54-39 lead in the third quarter. With Ateneo's wingmen unable to find their marks, Osaka remained in control with a Wilson putback, 60-48.

But the Eagles did not surrender. Enrico Villanueva and Rich Alvarez forced their way inside as the Eagles threatened, 62-59, 1:13 left. But Castro and Cuan relieved the pressure with four charities in the ensuing plays.

"The long break helped us greatly. The team played with fresh legs," said Osaka mentor Franz Pumaren. "We also want this one. There's lot of emotions and pride involved when you go up against Ateneo." Osaka is composed mostly of La Sallians.

Ateneo's outside game failed to materialize all throughout the game. The Blue Eagles went 2-of-15 from the three-point range.

Castro, shoved into the limelight due to the absence of Ren Ren Ritualo, exploded with five triples as he conspired with Mike Bravo in preventing the Blue Eagles from seizing control.

Cuan, back after an ankle injury, also held his own against veteran playmaker Edrick Ferrer, while Adonis Sta Maria and Wilson also banged the boards against their much-taller foes.

Rainier Sison was hardly a factor and finished with just two points. He missed a triple and got his shot blocked by Wilson in the closing minutes.

The scores:

First game: (PYBL)

JRC 79—Santos 21, De la Rea 20, Gregorio 18, Finillar 8, Lazaro 5, Villan 4, Jorge 3, De los Reyes 0.
MAPUA 75—Sta. Maria 24, Lagar 15, Marucol 10, Artista 10, Bangoy 6, Dula 5, Guevarra 0, Roxas 0.
Quarters: 18-18, 43-41, 59-58, 79-75.

Second game:

OSAKA 66—Castro 21, Cuan 10, Ramos 8, Bravo 7, Wilson 6, Sta. Maria 6, Malonzo 3, Franco 2, Magsumbol 2, Jose 1, Torres 0, Omolon 0.
ATENE0 59—Alvarez 17, Villanueva 16, Ferrer 11, Gonzales 5, Bugia 4, Cruz 4, Sison 2, Tan Chi 0, Racho 0, Manubag 0.
Quarters: 17-17, 33-35, 54-39, 66-59.



RICHARD Alvarez of Ateneo-Pioneer (left) drives past Osaka Iridology's Nelbert Omolon.
BETOY JOHNSON

Puyat accepts post as BAP president, says legal counsel

BY JUNE NAVARRO

BONI Alentajan, executive vice president of the Basketball Association of the Philippines, said yesterday that Lito Puyat has accepted his election as BAP president.

According to Alentajan, who also sits as legal counsel of the BAP, Puyat warmly received the BAP presidency after being elected to the post last Dec. 22 in absentia.

In that snap election, Freddie Jalasco was ousted as BAP president.

"We had a short talk yesterday and he (Puyat) said it's fine for him to sit again as BAP president. Should Mr. Puyat relinquish his position, we will just hold another election," said Alentajan.

He said the oath-taking will take place probably next week in Angeles City, the hometown of newly installed BAP chair Antonio Angeles.

Alentajan added Jalasco has no authority to call for another elections "since he was already ousted as BAP president."

Jalasco earlier called for a general assembly tomorrow to settle the problem besetting the BAP. He could not be reached for comment.

Alentajan also lambasted the Philippine Olympic Committee for joining the fray, saying the Olympic body has no right to interfere with the internal affairs of the association.

"The POC should take their hands off on this problem because the BAP, as stated in its charter, enjoys full au-

tonomy as an accredited member of the International Basketball Federation (Fiba)," said Alentajan, the POC's legal counsel during the time of Gen. Rene Cruz (ret.).

He cited the case of the International Olympic Committee, whose only role Alentajan said is to look after the facilitation of the Olympic Games and the Olympic movement.

Alentajan added the IOC's hands-off policy on the affairs of the international federations is similar with the POC and its relationship with the national sports associations as governed by the Olympic body's constitution and by-laws.

"The POC can only intercede if the squabble is between NSAs," said Alentajan.

With respect to the elections, which dethroned Jalasco on Dec. 22, Alentajan said the POC is in no position to question the elections since the BAP formed a quorum with 23 of 24 board members present.

"Moreover, our by-laws do not require a POC observer within the elections. There's no provision in the POC charter citing that condition," said Alentajan.

His pronouncements came as a big blow to Jalasco, who was earlier appointed as Southeast Asian Games chief of mission by POC president Celso Dayrit.

But Alentajan offered Jalasco a veritable solution, urging him to appeal his case before the BAP national board in case the executive board turns it down.

PBL a professional league—GAB

BY DENNIS U. EROA

IF THE Games and Amusements Board is to be believed, the country now has three professional basketball leagues other than the PBA and the MBA.

In a stunning decision, the GAB had ruled that the PBL is not an amateur league and thus subject to the regulatory and supervisory authority of the government body.

The GAB decision was issued last Dec. 19 and was signed by chair Dominador Cepeda Jr. and commissioners Roque A. Soriso and Hermogenes

F. Arayata Jr.

PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad said yesterday he was not bothered a bit by the decision.

"The PBL will live on," said Trinidad. "I've already referred the matter to our legal counsel. As far as I am concerned, the PBL is amateur. I'm not going to lose sleep regarding this. The league stands on solid grounds."

Dioceldo Sy, PBL chair, also said that the ruling will not in any way affect the conduct of the ongoing PBL Challenge Cup.

"At the end of the day, the PBL

position will be upheld because it is based on merits," Sy said.

If the GAB is to be followed, the PBL and its competing teams should now register with the GAB before it could open shop.

Also required to secure GAB licenses are the PBL players, team officials, personnel, including the managers, coaches and staff, game officials, referees, timekeepers and scorers.

The PBL shall also secure GAB permits for its games and allow GAB personnel to observe and monitor the games.

The league must also remit to the GAB 3 percent share in the gross gate receipts and income from TV, radio and motion picture rights, if any.

Cepeda said the GAB started its investigation upon the petition of Graham Lim, secretary general of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

In his letter dated May 23, 2000, Lim petitioned the GAB to declare the PBL a professional league "because the players are receiving salaries from their respective mother teams."

The PBL received the GAB ruling only yesterday.

McKie, Iverson spark 76ers victory

PHILADELPHIA—Aaron McKie had his second straight triple-double and Allen Iverson scored 21 points as the Philadelphia 76ers snapped a four-game home losing streak Wednesday night with a 98-80 victory over the Atlanta Hawks.

The Sixers, coming off an impressive three-game road sweep that included victories at Utah and Sacramento, won their fourth straight and improved to 22-8—the NBA's best record. McKie had 11 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists.

Theo Ratliff had 17 points and 11 rebounds. Tyrone Hill added eight points and 11 rebounds and George Lynch had 12 points and eight rebounds for Philadelphia, which hadn't won at the First Union Center since beating Charlotte 95-74 on Dec. 1.

Jason Terry scored 17 points and Roshown McLeod, Matt Maloney and Dion Glover each had 10 for Atlanta, which had won five of its previous seven.

Knicks 100, Celtics 91

In Boston, the New York Knicks

avenged their last defeat, getting 25 points from Allan Houston to defeat the Celtics. New York has won five straight since losing to Boston on Dec. 21.

Houston scored four points in a 6-0 Knicks run, giving New York an 83-76 lead before Antoine Walker hit two 3-pointers to cut the lead to 85-82 with 6:24 left. An 11-3 run, highlighted by Chris Childs' 3-pointer with 1:44 remaining, gave the Knicks a 96-85 lead.

Walker led Boston with 30 points. Bucks 88, Cavaliers 83

In Milwaukee, Ray Allen scored 25 points and had a career-high six of Milwaukee's 17 steals as the Bucks beat the revamped Cavaliers.

The Bucks won for the 15th time in 19 games, their best stretch since starting out the 1990-91 season 25-8. But it was ugly.

They shot just 35 percent, including 24-of-70 from their starting five—Allen was 8-of-20—and had to make up for it from the foul line (20-of-24) and on defense.

Cleveland lost for the seventh time in eight games despite a season-high 18 points and 15 rebounds from rookie Chris Mihm, 18 points from Chris Gatling and 17 from Lamond Murray.

Pistons 107, Mavericks 104

In Dallas, Jerry Stackhouse scored three of his 33 points on free throws in the final 26 seconds and Joe Smith had season-highs of 28 points and 15 rebounds as Detroit beat Dallas in the Mavericks' first game with Donnie Nelson replacing his ailing dad as coach.

Lakers 82, Jazz 71

In Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 12 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter, and Shaquille O'Neal had 24 points, 17

rebounds and five blocked shots before fouling out.

Winning their third straight game and their eighth in the last nine, the Lakers also avenged a 97-92 loss to the Jazz on Nov. 1 that put a damper on their NBA championship ring ceremony.

The Jazz have lost a season-high four straight games and eight of 12 since winning 16 of their first 20. AP

Complete results: Philadelphia 98, Atlanta 80; New York 100, Boston 91; Milwaukee 88, Cleveland 83; Detroit 107, Dallas 104; Phoenix 90, LA Clippers 85; Portland 102, Indiana 86; Vancouver 99, Charlotte 89; Denver 111, Golden State 100; LA Lakers 82, Utah 71. AP

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY
LORENZO MANGUAT

BASKETBALL: U.S. NCAA

—Duke Blue Devils vs Florida State Seminoles at 8 a.m., Indiana Hoosiers vs Wisconsin Badgers at 4:30 p.m. on ESPN

NBA - Orlando Magic vs New York Knicks at 9 a.m. (r-9 p.m.) on Star Sports

NBA Inside Stuff at 8:30 p.m. on Star Sports

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: Super Bowl X Highlights

—Pittsburgh Steelers vs Dallas Cowboys at 6:30 a.m. (r), Super Bowl XI Highlights - Oakland Raiders vs Minnesota Vikings at 4 p.m. on ESPN

BILLIARDS: 2000 WPBA Classic Tour, Semifinal #1 at 7:30 p.m. on ESPN

GOLF: Inside the PGA Tour at 12 noon (r-8 p.m.) on Star Sports

Asian PGA/ Davidoff Tour - 2000 Year In Review at 6 p.m. (r) on Star Sports



Rev. Antonio Gelaga SMA Deacon (Misamis Oriental) and Rev. German Patiga SMA Deacon (Leyte) Preparing for mission in Africa

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**Tiger dyes hair
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SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Gazpar earns P50,000

CALOY Gazpar pocketed the P50,000 top prize after ruling the Big Shots 9-ball billiards executive open tournament held recently at the Big Shots Billiards along Quezon Ave. The event was presented by Gandour Phils., Express Internet, Lipovitan, Aska Cue, Dep Styling Gel, Pearl of Pacific Resort and Cricket Lighters.

Purefoods shops for new coach; Banal eyed

BY MARC ANTHONY REYES

"WE WERE caught by surprise."

Thus said Purefoods manager Rene Pardo yesterday after learning about the transfer of Hotdogs coach Derrick Pumaren to Tanduay Gold.

The story was exclusively carried by Inquirer yesterday.

Pardo said they are now looking for Pumaren's replacement and expect to complete the job before the PBA annual drafting on Jan. 14.

Joel Banal was being mentioned as a possible replacement, according to a source close to Purefoods.

Banal was tapped to coach Purefoods three years ago but the talks fell through when it was learned that Banal had already signed up as coach of the Pasig-Rizal Pirates in the Metropolitan Basketball Association.

Banal was said to have the backing of Purefoods franchise player Alvin Patrimonio, who played with Banal during their college years at Mapua.

Sources said Purefoods was also eyeing Shell Velocity coach Perry Ronquillo.

"We don't want to burn bridges with other teams by getting a PBA coach with a live contract," said Pardo. "But I suddenly realized that we have very few coaches left in the country."

He said they have prepared a list of people to talk with but refused to reveal the names.

Pardo, however, discounted the possibility that they will hire sacked Tanduay coach Alfrancis Chua and former Purefoods coach Eric Altamirano.

The Purefoods executive also attributed the Hotdogs' two championship stints last season to Pumaren's coaching skill even as he expressed surprise over the INQUIRER's exclusive story.

"I thought it was a done deal between us and Pumaren," Pardo told the INQUIRER. "We have approved his proposal for a two-year extension."

Nevertheless, Pardo said they will not contest Pumaren's departure and said he appreciated the coach's contribution to the team.

His only concern, he said, is the expired contracts of Rommel Daep, Braulio Lim and Jessie Cabanayan, who signed up with the team along with Pumaren.

"However, I told them that if they have offers outside, we would release them," said Pardo.

He added that if worse comes to worst, they will tap former coach-turned-executive Eli Capacio to call the shots for the Hotdogs.



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*Actual models may vary from pictures shown.

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Downpayment	12 months		24 months		48 months		
	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	
20%	340,000	7.08%	121,358	18.79%	67,315	45.67%	41,274
50%	850,000	4.62%	74,106	16.07%	41,109	42.33%	25,205
JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE							
Downpayment	12 months		24 months		48 months		
	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	
20%	640,000	6.82%	227,883	18.51%	126,411	45.32%	77,504
50%	1,600,000	4.21%	138,947	15.62%	77,080	41.78%	47,260
DODGE DURANGO							
Downpayment	12 months		24 months		48 months		
	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	AOR	Monthly	
20%	540,000	6.02%	190,836	17.62%	105,858	44.23%	64,904
50%	1,350,000	2.93%	115,797	14.19%	64,232	40.03%	39,384

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Per DTI-SICR permit no. 3480 series of 2000

Duremdes stays with Alaska Milk

KENNETH Duremdes will stay with Alaska Milk after all.

After the highly publicized, week-long negotiations, the 1996 MVP finally said yes yesterday to the clauses offered by Alaska management.

That is in addition to the assured P42-million, seven-year deal, according to Duremdes' agent, Danny Espiritu.

Espiritu said he called up Mobiline to inform them of Duremdes' decision. The Phone Pals have offered the same amount to get the player's services.

Espiritu refused to discuss the clauses, which proved to be the only stumbling block on the return of the 6-foot-3 swingman to the Aces fold.

Under the new contract, Duremdes will receive the maximum P500,000 monthly paycheck, which will be automatically adjusted once the PBA decides to increase the salary ceiling.

Duremdes is presently in the United States and was represented by Espiritu during the negotiation.

Alaska manager Joaqui Trillo has declared that they will build the Aces around Duremdes and Bong Hawkins, whose contract renewal is already a done deal, according to Espiritu.

Duremdes finished among the Mythical Five during last season's annual awards and even led in statistical points midway through the Governors Cup before eventual MVP Danny Idefonso surpassed him.

Duremdes was also a key to the Aces' 2000 All-Filipino Cup title, in the process winning the best player award of conference.

Marc Anthony Reyes



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Blood, water spilled for P50

JULIO Branzuela alias Junior Escoba escaped after shooting to death Eduardo Mercado, who delivered water for a living, in Tondo, Manila on Jan. 2. Mercado refused to deliver water to Branzuela after the latter refused to pay his wife's P50-debt to the water man.

Jerome Aning

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Peace man shot dead

TRICYCLE driver Zabex Pajuelas tried to stop his friend Reynaldo Garcia from beating up Garcia's common-law wife Wednesday night, in Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City. For his peacemaking effort, Pajuelas was shot dead by the wife-beater with a sumpak (homemade gun). Garcia escaped.

Philip C. Tubeza

Court extends TRO vs MMDA dump plan



RUBBISH ROAD may as well be the name of C-5 Road, which runs through Taguig, Makati and Pasig. Both sides of the road have become a dump, with both residents and motorists being seen throwing trash.

BY ALCUIN PAPA, DAVE M. VERIDIANO, HAZEL P. VILLA AND ODON S. BANDIOLA, PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

THE ANTIQUE Regional Trial Court has extended for 20 days the temporary restraining order it issued against the Metro Manila Development Authority's plan to dump garbage on Semirara Island in that province.

Days after the San Mateo Sanitary Landfill in Rizal province was closed down permanently on Dec. 31, the MMDA has still not announced an alternative dumpsite for Metro Manila's garbage that is now spilling on city streets.

One congressman warned that an outbreak of infectious diseases is threatening Metro Manila as industrial, household and even contaminated hospital wastes are being dumped everywhere.

Four Panay provinces have voiced strong opposition to the MMDA plan to set up a sanitary landfill project on Semirara Island.

The provincial boards of Antique, Aklan, Capiz and Iloilo passed separate resolutions condemning the setting up of a dumpsite on Semirara.

Aklan's provincial board, in a resolution passed Wednesday, said Metro Manila's wastes would endanger not only Semirara but also the famous island resort of Boracay.

Semirara is about 15

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3522, Series of 2000

Vice mayor cries 'harassment'

By CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

CALOOCAN City Vice Mayor Oscar Malapitan yesterday said he would go to jail willingly if the Sandiganbayan could prove his guilt even as he denied falsifying public documents in July 2000.

"I'm willing to go to jail if I am proven guilty," he told the INQUIRER. "This is a clear case of political harassment."

Malapitan and his ally, city council secretary Lorenzo Sunga Jr., are facing charges before the Sandiganbayan for allegedly tampering with a city council resolution which required three local of-

ficials to appear before a council session.

Malapitan alleged that the case, filed by Councilor Edgar Erice and other administration councilors, was meant simply to harass him for questioning Malonzo's memorandum.

The Office of the Ombudsman recommended a P24,000 bail each for the temporary liberty of Malapitan and Sunga.

The tampered resolution summoned Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo's secretary Francisco Veza, budget officer Juanito Ortiz, and treasurer Hernando Banta to a

July 2000 council session to explain why Malonzo issued a memorandum reducing the number of job order workers in the City Hall.

The three officials are all faithful supporters of Malonzo, Malapitan's bitter political rival.

But Malapitan said he did not do anything wrong and continued to deny he had falsified legal documents.

"The papers were legitimate," he said. "What's wrong with asking three officials to appear before the council session to shed light on a very serious matter?"

for his father.

The older Calayag was said to have gotten furious with his nephew and threatened to kill him. The nephew ignored his threat and simply walked away, police said.

When the uncle saw his nephew a few minutes later, he attacked him with a knife, but the younger man grabbed the knife away from him and used it to stab him, Rios said.

The younger Calayag is now facing homicide charges. **Christian V. Esguerra**

Young man kills uncle who sent him on drug errands

A YOUNG man stabbed to death his uncle who had attacked him with a knife after an argument over shabu on Wednesday in Malaban.

Ruben Calayag, 36, of David Santos Street, Barangay San Agustin, did not make it alive to the Malaban Municipal Hospital. He died from three stab wounds on the chest and body, police said.

His nephew Edgardo Calayag Jr., 20, surrendered to police accompanied by his father.

Investigation by PO1 Peter Rios showed that uncle and nephew had a heated argument at about 7 p.m. on Wednesday after the younger man refused to buy methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu from a supplier on Adante Street.

The young Calayag told police his uncle had often forced him to buy shabu for him. But on Wednesday, he refused to run another errand for his uncle. He told police he was supposed to buy medicines

Wednesday.

Toto, with two unidentified men, arrived at the house and confronted Mendoza over an old grudge, police said.

Toto allegedly brandished his .38 gun to intimidate Mendoza and his friends. Instead of getting cowed, Rosas rose to the defense of his friend. **Philip C. Tubeza**

Gun used in pistol-whipping fires, slays youth

A YOUNG man was killed in Quezon City Wednesday night by another man who accidentally shot him in the neck while pistol-whipping a third man.

Michael R. Mendoza, 18, was declared dead at the city's East Avenue Medical Center, police said.

The suspect, identified only as Toto, pis-

tol-whipped Mendoza's friend Marcelino A. Rosas with a .38 pistol but the gun accidentally fired and hit Mendoza, police said.

The two young men were drinking with two other men in the house of a friend in San Roque, Barangay Pag-asa, when the alleged accident happened about 10 p.m.

at least, not for the next two years.

Trinidad said Pasay has a "secret" dumpsite big enough to accommodate the city's garbage for 24 months or more.

"The garbage seen in some areas of Pasay was left uncollected by garbage collectors after they went on holiday," he explained. "We expect to complete its disposal within the next two days."

On Wednesday, Rep. Heherson T. Alvarez (Lakas, Isabela) warned that infectious diseases could break out in the metropolis.

"Uncollected garbage poses serious health problems such as gastroenteritis, diarrhea, food poisoning and other ailments," Alvarez said in a statement.

"Garbage brings flies, mosquitoes and other insects, and with them, other ailments such as skin and respiratory diseases, not to mention foul smell which enters households," he said.

Court extends...

(From page A23)

miles from Boracay.

The Department of National Defense and the MMDA said they are ready to pool their resources to curb the garbage problem.

DND and MMDA officials met Wednesday in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City to discuss the garbage problem.

Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado said the Armed Forces of the Philippines is ready to make its resources available to the MMDA to solve the problem.

But Mercado stressed the DND is not taking over the responsibility of collecting Metro Manila's garbage since the MMDA claimed the problem is not anchored on collection and disposal.

In Taguig, garbage is piling up along C-5 Road, which also crosses Makati and Pasig. Residents along C-5 Road complained to

the INQUIRER that the garbage piles have become eyesores and threaten the people's health.

A barangay official who requested anonymity said residents noticed that garbage trucks as well as private vehicles have been dumping garbage on C-5.

He said he spotted a Mitsubishi L-300 van throw what looked like "industrial waste" along the road. Concerned residents took down the plate number of the van and submitted it to authorities.

To compound the problem, long stretches of C-5 are not lighted because the light bulbs have been stolen.

"Because there are no lights along the highway, people have resorted to throwing their garbage there," the barangay official said.

In Pasay City, Mayor Wenceslao "Pee-wee" Trinidad assured residents the city would not be affected by the garbage crisis-

Republic of the Philippines COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Manila

RULES AND REGULATIONS ON LOCAL ABSENTEE VOTING IN CONNECTION WITH THE MAY 14, 2001 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS.

DEMETRIOU, Harriet O., Chairman
DESAMITO, Julio F., Commissioner
FLORES, Teresita D.L., Commissioner
TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G., Commissioner
LANTION, Ralph C., Commissioner
JAVIER, Rufino S.B., Commissioner
SADAIN, Mehol K., Commissioner

-----x Promulgated: 29 December 2000

RESOLUTION NO. 3439

The Commission on Elections, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, other election laws and Executive Order No. 157 issued on March 30, 1987, RESOLVED to promulgate, as it hereby promulgates, the following rules on absentee voting:

SECTION 1. Absentee voting defined. — Absentee voting as provided under RA 7166 and EO No. 157, is a system of voting whereby any person who by reason of public functions and duties, is not in his/her place of registration on election day may vote in the city/municipality where he/she is assigned on election day. Provided, That he/she is a duly registered voter.

SEC. 2. Who are entitled to avail of absentee voting. — Absentee voting shall be exercised by: a) government officials and employees; b) members of the AFP; and c) members of the PNP, provided, they are duly registered voters and temporarily assigned on election day in places where they are not registered to perform public functions and duties.

SEC. 3. Positions to be voted for. — Only the positions for Senator and Party-list shall be voted for under the absentee voting.

SEC. 4. Committee on absentee voting. — A Committee on Absentee Voting (Committee) is hereby created composed of the Director IV of the Election and Barangay Affairs Department as chairman, and the Directors III of the Law Department and the Election Records and Statistics Department respectively, as members.

The Committee shall have the following functions:

- Receive applications for absentee voting;
- Verify whether the applicants are eligible for absentee voting;
- Act on applications for absentee voting;
- Send to the provincial election supervisor (PES) the exact number of absentee ballots corresponding to the number of approved applications;
- Receive under proper receipt the accomplished absentee ballots and other related documents from the supervisor/commander concerned or his representative, and to take custody thereof for safekeeping;
- Group in bundles of 500 the absentee ballots in the order of receipt;
- Appoint members of the special Board of Election Inspectors (BEI);
- Deliver the absentee ballots contained in a ballot box immediately after the close of voting on May 14, 2001 to the special BEI for counting;
- Supervise the counting of ballots and canvassing of votes.
- Receive for safekeeping all ballot boxes containing the counted ballots and related election documents from the special BEIs and board of canvassers for absentee voting.
- Notify all EOs whose registered voters have opted to cast votes thru absentee voting with a directive that they indicate in the list of voters with voting record in the corresponding space opposite the names of those who cast votes thru absentee voting and indicate as follows: "voting thru absentee voting" to prevent de-activation.

SEC. 5. Special BEIs. — There is hereby constituted as many BEIs for absentee voting as may be necessary by the Committee to count the absentee votes. They shall be chosen from among Commission personnel in the main office in Manila, not later than April 27, 2001.

SEC. 6. Oath of members of BEI. — Before assuming their office, the chairmen and members of the BEI shall take and sign an oath before any officer authorized to administer oaths. The oaths shall immediately be submitted to the Committee.

SEC. 7. Procedure for filing of application for absentee voting. — a) Not later than April 14, 2001, the supervisor in the case of gov't employees, the battalion commander, in the case of the AFP, and the station commander, in the case of the PNP shall submit the PES and the Committee in Manila, the list of the registered voters under his supervision/command availing of the absentee voting, with a request that they be provided with application forms for absentee voting. The list shall also indicate the city/municipality and barangay where they are registered, as well as their place of assignment. The list and the request shall be under oath.

b) On the day of the receipt of the request for application forms and the list, the PES shall issue such number of application forms corresponding to the number of applicants to the supervisor / battalion / station commander (commander) concerned or his authorized representative. The PES shall keep a record of the different government offices to which the application forms were sent and the number of forms sent.

c) The supervisor/commander shall distribute the application forms to their respective employees/members.

d) The accomplished application forms shall be returned not later than April 21, 2001 to the supervisor/commander who shall in turn submit the same to the Committee in Manila immediately upon receipt not later than April 25, 2001. A copy of the transmittal letter shall be furnished the PES.

In all cases, the issuance, return and submission of the application forms shall be by the fastest means.

SEC. 8. Absentee ballots. — Upon receipt of the list of voters requesting for application for absentee voting from the supervisor/commander concerned, the Committee shall immediately verify if the listed names are registered voters. Upon verification and approval of applications, the Committee shall record in a log book the names of the government employees/members of the AFP/PNP who are qualified to vote absentee. Thereafter, the Committee shall transmit, not later than April 30, 2001, the exact number of absentee ballots, envelopes and paper seals corresponding to the number of approved applications and thumbprint takers to the PES. The PES shall make a list in four (4) copies of the names of the government employees/members of the AFP/PNP who are qualified to vote absentee. He shall distribute the lists not later than May 7, 2001, as follows:

- to the corresponding supervisor/commander, together with absentee ballots and other paraphernalia;
- to the EO concerned with instructions to indicate in the corresponding list of voters with voting record that said voters are availing of absentee voting; and
- to the Committee in Manila.

He shall retain a copy for his file. The PES shall also keep a record of the names of the supervisors/commanders to whom the ballots, security envelopes, paper seals and the list of voters were delivered, and the exact number of absentee ballots delivered with their serial numbers. A copy of such record shall be furnished the Committee.

SEC. 9. Security envelopes for absentee ballots. — There shall be two security envelopes for each absentee ballot namely, an outer envelope and an inner envelope both with serial numbers. The outer envelope into which the detachable coupon shall be placed, shall contain spaces for the name of the voter, and his/her voter's registration record number (VRN).

The inner envelope into which the accomplished ballot shall be placed, shall contain no other mark except an indication that it is an envelope of the Commission on Elections.

SEC. 10. Date and place voting. — The absentee voter shall vote on May 7, 2001. For this purpose, the supervisor/commander shall designate the time and place of voting where the voters shall converge to vote.

SEC. 11. Distribution of absentee ballots, envelopes and paper seals. — On voting day, the supervisor/commander concerned, shall distribute the ballots, envelopes and paper seals to the qualified voters.

- require each voter to affix his signature, opposite his name in the list prepared by the Committee under Sec. 8 hereof;
- detach one ballot from the pad of ballots and retain the stubs where the serial number appears;
- write the serial numbers of the ballot, security envelope, and paper seal opposite the name of the voter in the list;
- give to the voter the ballot, two security envelopes and two (2) paper seal; and
- instruct the voter to immediately fill-up the ballot and return the same to him.

SEC. 12. Manner of voting. — The absentee voter shall:

- fill up the ballot secretly;
- imprint his thumbmark on the proper place in the detachable coupon of the ballot;
- detach the coupon from the ballot and place the same inside the outer envelope;
- place the filled out ballot inside the inner envelope, close and seal the same;
- place the sealed inner envelope inside the outer envelope, which shall likewise be sealed;
- write his name and VRN on the spaces provided for in the outer envelope; and
- submit the sealed security envelope to the supervisor/commander.

SEC. 13. Transmittal of absentee ballots and other election documents to the Committee. — The filled out ballots shall be transmitted immediately after collection to the Committee in Manila by the fastest means available, so that the ballots are received one day before the elections. The commander/supervisor concerned shall prepare a transmittal letter in two (2) copies indicating the names of the persons who cast the absentee votes and their voter's VRN numbers. He shall submit a copy of the letter to the Committee and a certification on the number of ballots collected. The second copy of the transmittal letter shall be sent to the EO concerned who shall indicate in the list of voters with voting record that said voters have availed of absentee voting.

The PES shall likewise return to the Committee in Manila whatever excess application forms for absentee ballots remaining in his custody.

SEC. 14. Proceedings of the special BEI. — The special BEI shall meet in any available office of the Commission, Intramuros, Manila, at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon of May 14, 2001 to count the votes cast by the absentee voters and shall not adjourn until the counting is completed. All proceedings of the special BEI shall be public. The special BEI shall act through its chairman and all questions presented before it shall be decided without delay. Its decisions shall be by majority vote of the members. During meetings, not more than one member shall be absent at a time, and in no case shall such absence be for more than twenty (20) minutes.

SEC. 15. Manner of counting absentee ballots. — The envelopes containing the absentee ballots shall be placed in ballot boxes and distributed to the different special BEIs at the rate of five hundred (500) envelopes per special BEI. The special BEI shall proceed with the counting as follows:

- retrieve the special envelopes from the ballot box;
- open each outer envelope, retrieve the inner envelope and the detachable coupon;
- place the coupons in the compartment for spoiled ballots of the ballot box;
- open the inner envelope and retrieve the ballot found therein;
- pile the ballots in bundles of one hundred (100) each;
- read and count the ballots;
- record by a vertical line on the proper spaces in the election returns each vote read and counted. Every fifth vote shall be recorded by a diagonal line crossing the previous four vertical lines;

ARE presidents always more honorable than outstanding sportsmen?

There was no Philippine flag to drape the casket of the great Lauro Mumar before he was laid to rest at the Manila Memorial Park in the early '90s.

Naturally, I mentioned this oversight when I was made to say a little something at his gravesite before The Fox was finally buried.

I remember choking a bit as I reminded the mourners, including the late Tembong Melencio, that it was Mumar who opened the door wide to the bigtime Manila commercial leagues for players from the Visayas, mainly Cebu.

Yoyong Martires, Jesse Sullano, Boy Eusebio and a few other obscure Cebuano players became overnight sensations when Mumar piloted them with the Mariwasa team to the Micaa title in 1968.

A great exodus of Cebu-based cagers followed, with the likes of Manny Paner, Dodie Miego, Estoy Estrada, Willie Velasco, to name only four, gracing the rich Manila circuit.

Of course, Mumar, himself a Visayan, also skipped the RP National team that finished third in the 1954 Rio de Janeiro World Basketball championship, a record for an Asian team.

Mumar, no doubt, had deserved a hero's burial. But, just like with the great tennister Felicisimo "Totoy" Ampon who passed away last year, Mumar's death did not get its deserved national attention.

Both sports heroes were not properly honored.

From what I have been told, there were many other deserving Filipino sports figures who had died obscure deaths.

While sports lovers in other countries compose hymns for their sports heroes, and even make their graves a pilgrimage site, we have not cared enough for late athletes who had won respect for the Filipino in foreign shores.

The last time I visited the tomb of Pancho Villa, first Filipino and Asian to win an international boxing crown, it was covered with grass at the La Loma Cemetery.

Luckily for Villa, born Francisco Guilleo in Negros, a grateful multitude turned up at the pier to welcome his body when it was shipped from the United States.

Nick Joaquin says Villa's funeral in the late 1920s was to be matched, if not surpassed, in attendance only by the burial of Ninoy Aquino in 1983.

The Pinoy abhors crooked, corrupt leaders. But, as demonstrated in the Villa and Aquino funerals, we never fail to go all out for genuine national heroes.

Now, this is not to demand a flag and hero's funeral for my friend Toti Sangalang, who passed away a day after the New Year, after a grim bout

h) write the partial sum of votes obtained by each candidate on the tally board and on the election returns. After finishing the first pile of 100 ballots, the BEI shall proceed to count the succeeding piles of ballots recording the partial sum of votes for each candidate after every 100 ballots are read and recorded; and

i) add the partial sum of the votes recorded for each candidate and record the total votes on the tally board and on the election returns after all ballots have been read.

SEC. 16. Election returns. — The election returns shall be prepared in six (6) copies and distributed as follows:

- The first copy to be submitted to the board of canvassers for absentee voting;
- The second copy, to the Commission to be submitted to the ERSD;
- The third copy, to be deposited inside the compartment for valid ballots of the ballot box;
- The fourth copy to the dominant majority party;
- The fifth copy to the dominant minority party; and
- The sixth copy to the accredited citizens arm of the Commission.

SEC. 17. Post counting procedure. — Upon the termination of the counting of votes, the special BEI shall:

- place in the envelope provided for the purpose the counted official absentee ballots;
- seal the envelope with paper seal;
- deposit the envelope properly sealed inside the compartment for valid ballots of the ballot box;
- bundle the inner envelopes used for the filled out ballots and deposit the same inside the compartment for valid ballots of the ballot box;
- place the 3rd copy of the election returns inside the compartment for valid ballots;
- close the ballot box with metal seals and padlocks;
- deliver the locked ballot box and the keys to the padlock to the Committee for safekeeping; and
- distribute the election returns according to Sec. 16 hereof.

SEC. 18. Board of canvassers for absentee voting. — There is hereby constituted a Board of Canvassers for absentee voting (Board) to be composed of a ranking lawyer of the Commission as chairman to be designated by the Chairman of the Commission, and as members, a lawyer from the Department of Justice and a ranking official from the Department of Education, Culture and Sports.

SEC. 19. Notice of canvass. — The chairman of the Board shall give notice of canvass to its members, the senatorial candidates and the political parties of the time, date and place of canvass at least five (5) days before May 14, 2001.

SEC. 20. Meeting of the board. — The Board shall meet not later than 6:00 o'clock in the evening of election day in any available office in the Commission, Intramuros, Manila, and proceed with the canvass of the election returns submitted to it by the special BEIs. It shall not adjourn until the canvass is completed, making available the date to the mass media and other interested parties.

SEC. 21. Certificate of canvass. — The Board shall prepare the Certificate of Canvass in six (6) copies for distribution as follows:

- The first copy to the Commission as National Board of Canvassers for use in the canvass of the election results for senators;
- The second copy to be retained by the chairman of the Board;
- The third copy of the citizens arm designated by the Commission to conduct a media-based unofficial count, and
- The fourth, fifth and sixth copies to the three (3) accredited major political parties.

SEC. 22. Watchers. — In every meeting of the Board, each candidate for Senator, each duly registered political party, organization or coalition of political parties, which has nominated candidates for Senator, and one duly accredited citizen arm of the Commission of national constituency, shall be entitled to appoint in writing one (1) watcher. Civic, religious, professional, business, youth and any other similar organizations with prior authority of the Commission, shall collectively be entitled to appoint one (1) common watcher.

SEC. 23. Effectivity. — This Resolution shall take effect on the seventh day after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

SEC. 24. Dissemination. — The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this Resolution in two (2) newspapers of general circulation and shall furnish copies thereof to the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, the Department of Justice, Chief of Staff, Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Director General of the Philippine National Police, and all deputized departments and agencies or instrumentalities and all field offices of the Commission.

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MEHOL K. SADAIN
Commissioner

ENTERTAINMENT

'Best ever' filmfest?

OUR movie people are so happy about the good showing of the recently-concluded Metro Manila Film

Festival that some of them have been saying that it's the best Metro filmfest ever.

Well, it's certainly

better than some past editions of the year-end festival (first as the Manila Film Festival, then as the

Metro Manila filmfest), characterized by mediocre entries and acting awards going to notorious hams—but,

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

"best ever?" I don't know about that.

Flicking through my files, I see that, in 1976, the festival fielded entries that included Eddie Romero's "Ganito Kami Noon, Paano Kayo Ngayon?", Lupita Concio-Kashiwara's "Minsa'y Isang Gamu-gamo" and Lino Brocka's "Insiang."

Obviously, you can't beat that triple triumph. That's why the '70s have been cited as one of the golden ages of Filipino movies.

"Ganito" startled audiences with its thematic and visual scope. It wanted to do nothing less than to discover, through its breezy historical dramatization, how we progressed from being a ragtag group of tribes into a nation.

"Gamu-gamo" similarly jolted viewers, but for a different reason. It was a strong indictment of American colonial rule in this country, as represented by the continued presence (up to the '90s) of the US bases in Luzon.

And "Insiang," despite its being a more intimate production, shocked audiences with its story of macho sexual oppression in the slums.

Three strong movies that were vividly realized by some of the country's most committed filmmakers—it'll take more that the recent festival's already creditable entries to top the 1976 edition's achievement.

The 1977 festival turns out to have been even more remarkable. Its entries included Romero's "Banta ng Kahapon," Celso Ad. Castillo's "Burlesk Queen," Lino Brocka's "Inay," Ishmael Bernal's "Walang Katapusan ng Tag-araw," Mario O'Hara's "Mga Bilangong Birhen" and Mike de Leon's "Kung Mangarap Ka't Magising? What a treasure trove of cinematic riches!

"Banta ng Kahapon" starred Vic Vargas, Roland Dantes and Bembol Roco. "Burlesk Queen" told the tragic story of a stripper (Vilma Santos). "Inay" topbilled Alicia Vergel.

"Walang Katapusan ng Tag-araw" LOCAL/A26

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More the Afternoon, Find the Excitement

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

A movie so good it makes you cry

I JUST finished watching "Tanging Yaman." The movie is deserving of all its awards. The pacing is just right, the sound and cinematography are excellent, and, above everything else, the story is truly inspiring.

The story revolves around the relationship of a mother (Gloria Romero, in an awe-inspiring performance), recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, with her three children, Danny (Johnny Delgado), Art (Edu Manzano), and Grace (Dina Bonnevie) and their respective families.

Everybody who has siblings and offsprings should take the time to watch this movie. Danny is the mother's favorite, even when he is the least successful and in his youth he was careless with his inheritance.

Why is he still his mother's favorite? Because, he effortlessly brings her the most joy and showers her with the most care and love. Johnny Delgado is simply adorable in the role.

Hilda Koronel has the role of Danny's wife. She is a supportive wife who loves her husband unconditionally and is sensitive to his emotional needs. Hilda still has one of the most exquisite faces I've ever seen on screen. Hers is a quiet role, but a clear reminder to all women of what a wife's role ideally would be—a loving, loyal and supportive life partner.

Edu Manzano is the middle child who has achieved the most. He is a successful lawyer with a beautiful home and is the one who generously provides his mother with a monthly allowance. But he has never felt loved or appreciated by his family. He becomes a hard man, severe in his treatment of his son Rommel (played by the soulful Jericho Rosales) and condescending in his treatment of his siblings, in particular his *Kuya* Danny.

Edu is breathtaking in giving depth to his characterization of Art. The scene where he breaks down and apologizes to his brother is definitely one of the movie's most emotionally rewarding moments.

In my opinion, there should really have been a tie for best actor between Johnny Delgado and Edu Manzano.

Dina Bonnevie plays Grace. She eloped at an early age, and she and Joel Torre, who plays her unappreciated husband, moved to the US and are both working desperately hard to provide a good home for their two kids. Her role is that of a woman who makes her life's decisions based on the depth of her love for a man, a woman who eventually must remember how fortunate she is to have that love in her life.

A revelation in this movie is Janet McBride who plays the willful and outspoken daughter of Grace. Dina and Janet make a terrific mother-daughter combination, and they are both blessed with intelligent, expressive and beautiful pairs of eyes, thus their ability to give powerful and evocative performances.

I must give praise to Carol Banawa. Her singing voice is truly a God-given talent that is angelic in its beauty.

The prayer of Cherrie Pie Picache, who plays Art's wife and Rommel's mother, to the Blessed Mother is very moving and faith-reaffirming for me. She asks for mercy for her son, and reminds Mama Mary that she herself is a mother, and would she please ask her Son to save her son?

Mothers are reminded who we can always turn to, especially in matters concerning the welfare of our kids.

"Tanging Yaman" has a simple message. A family will thrive and survive based on the ability of each member to accept, support, love and forgive one another.

I saw the movie on New Year's Day in Cinema 6 of Power Plant, the new mall at Rockwell. As we were exiting, all those waiting to get into the theater for the next screening were staring at those of us who had just seen the film and they all kept saying, "Mugto ang mga mata nila."

In typical Pinoy fashion, we could all be heard commenting, "Nakakaiyak. It was so good."

It was the first time for me to watch in Rockwell, and the cinemas are really well-designed. The seats are arranged stadium style (each row is elevated so you never have a head blocking your view), the air-conditioning is at a perfect temperature, the sound is crisp and clear, and the seats are very comfortable. Glorietta 4 now has worthwhile competition and we viewers are the clear beneficiaries.

I arrived Saturday night from a vacation in Hong

'Best ever' filmfest?

(From page A25)

sang Tag-araw" starred Charito Solis, Eddie Garcia and Liza Lorena.

"Mga Bilangong Birhen" topbilled Alma Moreno and Trixia Gomez. And the leads of "Kung Mangarap Ka't Magising" were Hilda Koronel and Christopher de Leon.

For its part, the 1978 festival distinguished itself with Eddie Garcia's "Atsay" (starring Nora Aunor) and Lino Brocka's "Rubia Servious" (Vilma Santos played the title role).

And, to round out the '70s, the 1979 edition of the festival had Lino Brocka's "Ina Ka ng Anak Mo" (Lolita Rodriguez, Nora Aunor) and Celso Ad. Castillo's "Ang Alamat ni Julian Makabayan" (Christopher de Leon, Charo Santos).

Clearly, future editions of the MMFF will have to work even harder to match the exceptional output of those golden years!

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino



Kong. I am writing this now not because I'm griping but as a warning to would-be travelers.

Be very careful about your checked-in luggage. I flew PAL so we used the Centennial terminal of the Naia. I was the last person to leave the baggage carousel, after more than an hour, because one of my suitcases was missing. I traveled with Joshua and Yaya Anna, so were entitled to six suitcases, and I retrieved only five suitcases from the carousel.

I was sure that all of our six suitcases were loaded in Hong Kong because I had all six claim tags, and I had my receipt because I paid \$100 for my overweight charges. When all the suitcases were claimed, there was one black Samsonite suitcase similar to my black Delsey that was left behind. It dawned on me that someone must have picked up and left with my suitcase. All our suitcases had prominent name tags, and the missing one belonged to Josh.

Luckily, the black suitcase that was left behind had a name tag with a name and phone number. Airport personnel contacted the man who had, I assumed, taken my suitcase, and he was already at home, and upon closer inspection he did verify that he

had Josh's suitcase.

Even curious me couldn't help but investigate with the airport people why it was possible for someone to leave with a suitcase that wasn't his, considering that airport security has to compare and check the baggage claim tags before allowing you to exit.

It turned out that he had VIP assistance, and was able to leave the airport with barely a cursory glance.

The man was apologetic, and the mistake was clearly an accident. (I'm sure he wasn't in the least bit interested in Josh's new Winnie the Pooh electric piano.) He lived in the Greenhills area so it was at least on our way home.

For those of you travelling in the future, try to be vigilant about claiming your luggage, (although my eyes were glued to the baggage carousel), have prominent name tags (which we did), and dependable locks (which our suitcase had).

I don't begrudge people who are accorded VIP privileges. I myself have been a recipient of it many times.

But to those who are given special attention, they must take it upon themselves to exercise special care. And to those who extend those special privileges, I hope they do so without inconveniencing others who aren't quite as "lucky."

POWER PLANT CINEMA		
Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No. 8981440-41		
TANGING YAMAN 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00	THE 6TH DAY 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE 12:50, 2:40, 4:30, 6:20, 8:10, 10:00
GATAS SA DIBDIB NG KAAWAY 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	MEET THE PARENTS 12:50, 3:20, 5:50, 8:20	MEET THE PARENTS 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

GLORIETTA 4 CINEMAS
MIDNIGHT SCREENINGS
SCREENING SCHEDULES
FOR JAN. 5 (Fri.) & 6 (Sat.)

	THE 6TH DAY (MTRCB Rating PG-13) 11:30 AM / 2:00 PM 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30 12:00 MN	
	MEET THE PARENTS (MTRCB Rating PG-13) 11:30 AM / 2:00 PM 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30 12:00 MN	

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THE 6TH DAY
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BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor



2000 budget deficit breaches P130B

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE ESTRADA administration's budget deficit last year was estimated to have exceeded P130 billion, a figure that Finance Secretary Jose T. Pardo had earlier ruled out as unlikely.

"It could go higher than P130 billion or within that vicinity," Pardo said after Wednesday night's Economic Coordinating Council meeting. A P130-billion deficit was equivalent to more than 4 percent of the country's gross national product.

This was also P5 billion more than the government's worst-case scenario of P125 billion; P67.5 billion more than the original target of P62.5 billion; P40 billion more than the revised target of P90 billion, and P18.3 billion more than 1999 deficit of P111.7 billion.

A P130-billion deficit last year meant that in December alone, the government had incurred a budget shortfall of P15.6 billion despite a commitment from the Bureau of Internal Revenue to deliver at least P360 billion in collection against its

target of P397.8 billion for the year.

The BIR also said earlier that it would collect P33 billion for the month of December.

Revenue during the first 11 months of the year stood at P464.51 billion against a target of P517.778 billion, or a shortfall of P53.27 billion of which the bulk of P38.689 billion came from the BIR.

Pardo said the government was still awaiting the final numbers from the BIR, the Bureau of Customs and the National Treasury.

This year, the government is hard-pressed to keep the deficit at P85 billion but even the finance chief had said

the number was not realistic as he expected the budget gap swelling to P120 billion for 2001.

The International Monetary Fund believed that under the best-case scenario, the Estrada administration would incur a budget gap of P88.4 billion or 3 percent of the gross domestic product versus a worst-case level of P139.3 billion or 3.6 percent of GDP.

The government is counting on a windfall revenue of P28 billion from the Marcos loot this year to bring down the deficit. However, the government remained uncertain that it could count the \$640 million in

Marcos wealth as revenue.

The Estrada administration's medium-term plan was to achieve a balanced budget—wherein expenses would equal revenue—by 2003 or a year before Mr. Estrada's term ends.

National Treasurer Leonor Briones said the gaping budget gap should not affect domestic interest rates since the deficit was "fully financed" from previous borrowing exercises of the government.

"I think the market has already factored in the deficit. We are doing all we can to tame the deficit," Briones said.

The IMF, in fact, said it expected

the budget deficit ballooning to P205.5 billion by the end of President Estrada's term instead of tapering down as the government had promised.

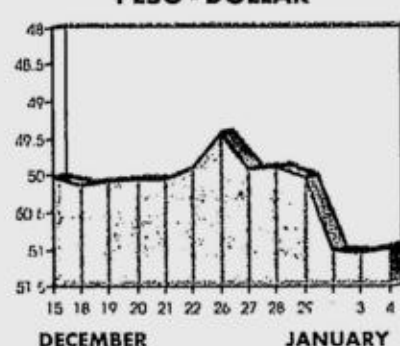
By 2002, the IMF said it projected the deficit would range from P95 billion or 2.2 percent of GDP to P170.4 billion or 4 percent of GDP. For 2003, the budget gap would peak at P175.5 billion or 3.8 percent of GDP from a low of P61.8 billion or 1.3 percent of GDP.

By the end of President Estrada's term, the IMF said it expected the deficit to swell to P205.5 billion or 4.1 percent of GDP from a low of P68.1 billion or 1.3 percent of GDP.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



Peso-Dollar Rate

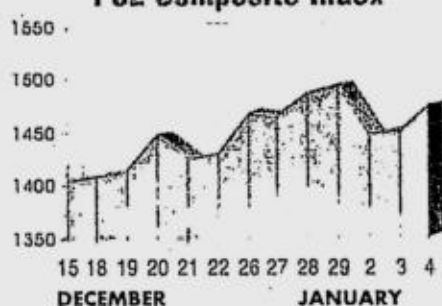
P50.97 = \$1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 4, 2001

Y113.82 = \$1
The US dollar was trading at 114.90 as of 5 p.m., Jan. 4, 2001

GOLD: \$268.40/268.90
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 4, 2001

STOCK MARKET

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks rise

STOCKS rose, mirroring gains across the region, on optimism a surprise US interest rate cut would extend the record economic expansion in the world's biggest economy. SM Prime Holdings Inc. led gains.

The Federal Reserve cut the benchmark US interest rate half a point to 6 percent, triggering a 14-percent rally in the Nasdaq Composite Index, the biggest gain ever.

"The sentiment is influenced by the jump in the US market," said Elen Cruz, portfolio manager of the Kabuhayan Fund in Manila, who doesn't think the gains will continue. "The jump in the region is not as enthusiastic as may be expected because I don't see how a 50-point cut can immediately turn around lagging computer sales, for example."

Bloomberg

French firm backs out of Uniwide deal

FRENCH retail giant Casino Gulchard-Perrachon has backed out of a deal with the Gow family's Uniwide Holdings Inc. (UHI) that would have given the cash-strapped retail operator P3.57 billion in fresh equity infusion.

The sudden pullout by the French group surprised most market participants specially since UHI has finally completed last week a much-delayed negotiation with creditor-banks for the restructuring of at least P10 billion worth of debts, a prerequisite to Casino's acquisition of an 80-percent stake in the company.

Industry sources said the French group had stressed that it was simply enforcing the deadline in the memorandum of understanding (MOU) inked with the Uniwide group which had lapsed Dec. 31. But other sources believed the French retailer was turned off by the political uncertainties hounding the country, specifically the spate of fatal bombings in Metro Manila over the weekend.

Prior to this news, UHI shares have been sharply rising in the stock market, reflecting investors' anticipation of the completion of the Casino deal. Yesterday, however, UHI was the biggest loser at the stock market, dropping by 37.25 percent to P0.32. It was the fourth most actively traded stock.

Monico Jacob, chair of the interim receivership committee for the Uniwide group of companies, told the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that the Casino group had announced its decision to call off the deal via a conference call only the night before.

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HOW TO WIN THE DREAM

1. Every single purchase or same-day accumulated purchases worth P2,500 (cash or charge) from the Men's Department (excluding Sale Items) at any Rustan's Department Store branch entitles you to one (1) raffle coupon, which will give you a chance to win a brand-new Jaguar S-Type, tax-free. *Actual Jaguar grand prize will be 50% off MSRP.
2. Simply present the proof of purchase at the designated counter of the Rustan's branch where you made your purchase. You will then receive the raffle ticket corresponding to your proof of purchase.
3. Fill out the raffle coupons and drop this at the designated drop boxes at the Rustan's Department Store where you made the purchase.
4. The preliminary draw will be held on February 28, 2001 at the 6/F of Rustan's Makati at 4:00 p.m. where a total of ten (10) preliminary winners will win P5,000 worth of Rustan's Gift Certificates will be drawn. A person can only win once.
5. Deadline for submission of raffle coupon will be on or before 8:00 p.m., February 15, 2001.
6. The Jackpot Round will be held on March 8, 2001 at the 2/F of Rustan's Makati at 4:00 p.m. in the presence of a DTI representative.
7. The prize will be one (1) brand new Jaguar S-Type. The game will be conducted in the presence of the Rustan's Marketing/Advertising staff and a DTI representative. The prize is not convertible to cash.
8. Winner will be notified through registered mail and telephone by Rustan's Commercial Corporation.
9. Winner can claim the prize at the Rustan's Head Office. Winner must present registered mail, proper identification card with picture and the winning raffle stub to claim their prize. Rustan's will not be liable for any lost claim stub.
10. Rustan's will not be responsible for transporting the grand prize to the winner's place of origin. In case of a provincial grand prize winner, Rustan's will not be responsible for air fare and/or accommodations in claiming of the grand prize.
11. Prizes not claimed within sixty (60) days from notification will be forfeited with prior approval from the Department of Trade and Industry.
12. Owners, management and employees of the Rustan Group of Companies and Jaguar Car's, Inc., their advertising agencies, their spouses and relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining Driven to Dream.
13. All decisions pertaining to Driven to Dream with prior approval from DTI will be deemed final and irrevocable.

Preliminary Draw: Ten (10) Preliminary Draw Winners
February 28, 2001 (Wednesday)
6/F Rustan's Makati
4:00 p.m.

Jackpot Round: March 8, 2001 (Thursday)
2/F Rustan's Makati
4:00 p.m.

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Consolation Prizes P5,000.00 worth of Rustan's Gift Certificates each
• To be given to all preliminary winners.
• Rustan's Gift Certificate is valid only at the participating departments of the promo.
• Rustan's Gift Certificate is good up to March 8, 2002 only.

*PROMO PERIOD: August 18, 2000 to February 15, 2001
See Posters for Details.

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Labor prospects, 2001

HOW can we make 2001 better than 2000 in the views of both the working class and the capitalists? How can we improve the situation of both labor and management? How do we make the first step toward a better year for all?

The year 2000 was indeed a difficult one from our perspective in the labor front. In our last week's column, we touched on eight factors exacerbating the peoples' pains: worsening unemployment; unabated workers' migration; erosion of workers' income; alleged diversions of SSS/GSIS funds; disruptions of industrial peace; pervasive job insecurity; labor justice that is still delayed; and, an outdated Labor Code.

We have eight proposals to address these problems. These are our small contribution to the thrust of improving the situation: employment as the main focus; reorienting recruitment priorities; workers' safety nets; privatizing the SSS and GSIS; labor justice improvement; redefining job security; and overhauling the Labor Code. We hope our esteemed Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma will consider these inputs. We hope Congress will likewise hear us out.

Focus on jobs

It was the venerable Ka Blas Ople who first postulated that unemployment was the workers' worst exploiter. Indeed, without a job, a person is not only without a means of living. He is without self-respect and self-confidence. He is easily hoodwinked, pressured and oppressed. He cannot buy goods. He cannot contribute to the wealth-making and wealth-using activities of human society. He is a non-entity. He is practically a living dead.

Thus, Ka Blas and his peers in Congress should not dissipate all their talents and idealism in the debilitating impeachment proceedings. They should make time to formulate a master plan for employment generation before they finish their terms. Employment

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez



is the No. 1 priority. It should be the main focus. All others should yield to it. It is the best empowerer of the working class.

Reorient, recruitment thrusts

Instead of a policy-bias in favor of overseas placement, labor administrators should consider a gradual shift to domestic employment. The Filipino manpower had already built enough megacities in the Middle East while our people live in slums. Our doctors and nurses have already served various US hospitals with their medical skills while compatriots here are dying without adequate medical care. Our women are being enslaved in Hong Kong and Singapore, caring for Chinese children while their own kids are being maltreated and victimized at home.

The time has come to say enough of the insatiable pursuit of the almighty dollar. We should now rebuild shattered Filipino families, help our own country and assist in alleviating the pains of our own people.

Workers' safety nets

We cannot just improve the purchasing power of the workers by increasing wages that, in turn, are inflationary and, ultimately, are purveyors of job insecurity. We should formulate non-wage benefits that

shall address the basic needs of food, shelter, health and education.

Privatize the SSS, GSIS

If the MWSS could be privatized, why not the SSS? If Napocor could be privatized, why not the GSIS? If water and power, which are basic needs of man, could be entrusted to the private sector, why not insurance and social security?

The way the systems are being administered now leads us to think that the GSIS and SSS cater primarily to the capital needs of private banks like Urban Bank and Equitable PCI Bank. The members are deemed contributors, not customers. SSS funds its own PR with a big, organic image-builder. Services to members are poor. Let's privatize the SSS and GSIS and integrate them into one truly customer-focused firms. And let them compete in open market, not hold us captive by statutory fiat.

Improve labor justice

Let's support the dynamic leaders of NLRC chair Señeres in making the NLRC truly effective in administering speedy, inexpensive and quality labor justice. Let the controlling precedents in St. Martine Funeral be abrogated. Let the appeal from the NLRC be direct to the Supreme Court as before.

Let some arbiters who are corrupt, inept and incompetent be reformed by the new NLRC chair. Let them face dismissal if found incorrigible. Give more cases to voluntary arbitration, which is the preferred mode of dispute settlement. Let the NCMB conciliators be promoted to the level of arbiters. And let thousands of mediation cases bloom into settlements.

Redefine job security

The strongest anchor of job security is not the Labor Code but a set of competitive skills. No law can

LABOR/B3

Ayala group shutting down hybrid corn seed business

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE AYALA group is shutting down the operations of Ayala Seeds Corp., a subsidiary engaged in the hybrid corn seed business, due largely to tough competition posed by multinational companies.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Ayala Corp. managing director Renato Marzan said its subsidiary Ayala Agricultural Development Corp. (AADC) decided to discontinue the hybrid corn seed business, which falls under Ayala Seeds Corp., "following a number of reverses which impaired the organization's operational efficiency."

Marzan said Ayala Seeds would cease operations this month.

"Following an increasing trend toward globalization and the reduction of tariffs, local players have faced stiff competition in the past few years against multinational corporations with extensive reach and easy access to vast research facilities," he said in the disclosure.

"The corn seed business is highly dependent on

the introduction of newer and better hybrids, the product of extensive biotechnology. To remain competitive, local players would need to match the resources of the more dominant market players," he added.

Marzan said the unfavorable weather conditions, particularly the frequent occurrence of the El Niño dry spell and a number of devastating typhoons, had likewise affected the viability of Ayala Seeds in the past 10 years.

Despite the closure of Ayala Seeds, however, AADC said it would continue its other viable business interests, namely: copra, cattle-raising and coconut seed gardening which produces high-quality hybrid coconut seeds.

AADC president Antonio Laurel said: "The competition to offer the farmer in the countryside cheaper and better-performing corn seeds has become fierce in the past few years."

"A company that does not have the scale necessary to quickly respond to the needs of the times will have difficulty competing. For the Filipino farmer, nevertheless, this has been a positive development."

Smart seeks NTC action on complaint vs Nextel

SMART Communications Inc. has asked the National Telecommunications Commission to act on its pending complaint against Infocomm Communications Network Inc. before imposing any sanction on Smart for its alleged refusal to interconnect with the trunk network operator.

In its complaint, Smart alleged that Infocomm, also known as Nextel Communications, has been offering phone service without the required authority.

In a statement issued yesterday, Smart said the Dec. 18, 2000 order of the NTC suspending any action on pending and future applications for permits, licenses or authorizations of Smart was a "precipitate" action of the NTC.

tate" action of the NTC.

It said that the determination of whether or not Nextel was illegally operating as a cellular provider would help resolve the interconnection dispute.

"Our position has always been that if Nextel wished to offer cellular phone service, then it must comply with all of the conditions imposed on cellular operators," said Smart legal head Rogelio V. Quevedo in the statement.

"That means it must apply for a license, go through hearings and if granted a CMTS license, Nextel must also install 400,000 landlines in an assigned service area," he added.

The official also said Nextel wanted to have a better interconnection agreement compared to other trunk network operators.

"Nextel has been bargaining not as a radio trunk operator, which it is, but as if it were a cellular phone operator, which it is not," he said. **Anthony O. Alcantara**

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. signed a partnership agreement with Philippine National Bank to provide telecommunications services for PLDT's existing and newly launched telecommunications backbone project.

ROBINSONS Land Corp. plans to replace the old Class "A" and Class "B" stock certificates with unclassified common stock certificates when they are traded or when replacement of stock certificates are requested by stockholders. The company's stock symbol was changed from "RLCB" to "RLC."

PHILCOMSAT Holdings Corp. will hold its special stockholders' meeting on Jan. 12, 2001 at 3 p.m. at the Manila Golf Club, Harvard Road, Forbes Park, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Dec. 6, 2000 are entitled to vote at the said meeting.

THE CHANGE in name of Semirara Coal Corp. to Semirara Mining Corp. will be reflected on the Exchange's computer system starting Jan. 8, 2001.

JARDINE Davies Inc. clarified that the AstraZeneca range of agricultural chemical products currently distributed by the company will be directly distributed by Syngenta AG starting April 1, 2001.

PRYCE Corp. paid on Dec. 8, 2000 all accumulated interests on the P300-million Long Term Commercial Papers.

KEPPEL Philippines Holdings Inc. announced the reduction of 345,176,789 common shares from its listed shares divided into 110,417,320 Class "A" shares and 234,759,469 Class "B" shares. The suspension of the trading of its shares will be lifted on Jan. 5, 2001.

THE LISTING of the additional 2,530,252,285 common shares of Wellex Industries Inc. was slated for Jan. 8, 2001. This is to cover the share-for-share swap between the company and William T. Gatchalian, Dee Hua T. Gatchalian, Sherwin T. Gatchalian, Shinji Kobayashi and Elvira A. Ting. **Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research**

Philippine Stock Exchange

		(As of Thursday, January 4, 2001)				VOLUME	
STOCKS		OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE		
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES							
BANKS							
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57.50	58.5	57.5	58	465,800		
China Banking Corp.	700.0	750	680	750	31,440		
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	55.00	55	55	55	10,900		
First E-Bank Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	27,000		
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	184.0	186	184	185	105,730		
Philippine National Bank	37.50	38.5	37.5	38	142,800		
Phil. Savings Bank	29.00	30	28	30	13,600		
Union Bank of the Phil.	30.50	31.5	30.5	31.5	27,000		
FINANCIAL SERVICE							
Bankard Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.54	1.54	175,000		
Filipino Fund Inc.	.3500	.35	.35	.35	20,000		
Manulife Financial Corp.	1470	1475	1450	1460	3,670		
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1290	1315	1260	1315	4,680		
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL							
COMMUNICATION							
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	49.50	49.5	49.5	49.5	4,300		
Diversified Fin. Network	7.50	10	7.5	10	14,000		
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	.4600	.46	.45	.48	420,000		
Globe Telecom Inc.	685.0	685	685	685	20		
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	4.00	4	4	4	5,000		
Piltel	.5300	.53	.53	.53	10,000		
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	885.0	885	875	875	46,030		
Ivanhoe Corp.	.8600	.88	.86	.88	30,000		
Philweb.com Inc.	.0390	.039	.038	.037	74,700,000		
POWER & ENERGY							
Manila Electric Co. "A"	45.00	46.5	45	45.5	99,400		
Manila Electric Co. "B"	47.00	48.5	46.5	48	516,200		
Petron Corp.	1.20	1.2	1.18	1.2	1,041,000		
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES							
Int'l Container Term'l SV	.7300	.73	.73	.73	920,000		
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS							
Republic Cement Corp.	.3300	.33	.33	.33	20,000		
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO							
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	25,000		
Jollibee Foods Corp.	9.70	9.7	9.7	9.7	25,000		
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	30.00	30	29.5	30	17,600		
Pure Foods Corp. "A"	80.00	80	80	80	2,000		
San Miguel Corp. "A"	48.00	49.5	48	49.5	90,000		
San Miguel Corp. "B"	54.00	54.5	53.5	54.5	77,100		
HOLDING FIRMS							
Ayala Corp.	7.30	7.4	7.3	7.4	1,541,000		
Aboltiz Equity Ventures	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.3	137,000		
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.50	12.5	11.75	12.25	1,900		
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.12	2.18	2.12	2.18	40,000		
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.9	999,000		
Southeast Asian Cement	.2000	.2	.2	.2	220,000		
DMCI Holdings Inc.	.2700	.27	.27	.27	220,000		
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	.0900	.09	.09	.09	400,000		
Fillinvest Dev. Corp.	.6800	.69	.66	.69	100,000		
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	20.50	20.5	20.5	20.5	12,200		
Global Equities Inc.	.3400	.34	.33	.33	380,000		
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	.2300	.23	.23	.23	100,000		
Ionics Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.75	292,100		
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.04	2.06	2.04	2.06	347,000		
Megaworld Corp.	.7600	.78	.76	.78	1,790,000		
Multitech Inv. Corp.	.5100	.51	.51	.51	1,900,000		
Metro Pacific Corp.	.5700	.58	.57	.58	10,210,000		
Solid Group Inc.	.4700	.5	.47	.48	122,750,000		
Univide Holdings Inc.	.3100	.37	.31	.32	86,690,000		
Wellex Industries Inc.	.4800	.49	.48	.48	870,000		
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	.3000	.35	.3	.35	220,000		
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING							
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.20	6.3	6.2	6.3	68,000		
Picop Resources Inc.	.1050	.11	.105	.11	340,000		
SPI Technologies Inc.	7.70	7.7	7.7	7.7	8,000		
Seniel Manufacturing	.6000	.6	.6	.6	10,000		
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE							
Belle Corp.	.6600	.66	.64	.64	420,000		
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	.8100	.81	.74	.74	1,330,000		
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	.4200	.42	.42	.42	3,480,000		
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS							
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	48.50	50	48.5	50	238,100		
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.90	2.9	2.9	2.9	103,000		
Globe Telecom Hldg. (PDR)	700.0	700	680	680	7,500		
Omico Corp. Warrant	.0026	.0026	.0026	.0026	30,000,000		
PLDT 10% Pref Series "Aa"	9.70	9.7	9.7	9.7	1,000		
PROPERTY							
Ayala Land Inc.	5.40	5.5	5.3	5.4	5,346,000		
Araneta Properties Inc.	.3000	.3	.3	.3	400,000		
Cebu Holdings Inc.	.4000	.4	.4	.4	10,000		
C & P Homes Inc.	.1900	.19	.18	.185	220,000		
Empire East Land Inc.	.2900	.3	.29	.3	4,920,000		
Fillinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.3	1.32	7,015,000		
Kuok Phil. Properties	.1500	.15	.15	.15	600,000		
Flu-Estate Land Inc.	.3100	.31	.31	.31	30,000		
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	100,000		
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.50	5.6	5.5	5.6	3,340,000		
MINING							
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.50	2.5	2.5	2.5	5,000		
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "A"	.1900	.19	.19	.19	150,000		
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "B"	.2000	.2	.2	.2	20,000		
Manila Mining Corp. "A"	.0060	.006	.006	.006	3,000,000		
Omico Corp.	.0038	.0038	.0038	.0038	303,150,000		
OIL							
Oriental Pet. & Min. "A"	.0042	.0042	.0042	.0042	1,000,000		
Pacific	.0150	.015	.015	.015	1,000,000		
South China Resources Inc.	.3000	.3	.3	.3	50,000		
SHARES							
Banks & Fin Svc	1,027,400				86,178,900.00		
Comm'l & Ind'l	343,578,450				220,258,397.00		
PRO	21,981,000				58,542,230.00		
Mining	153,175,000				633,000.00		
OIL	2,050,000				34,200.00		
GRAND TOTALS:	521,811,850				365,646,727.00		
AVERAGES							
Banks & Fin Svc	545.77				UP2.45		
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,080.77				UP38.81		
PRO	497.21				UP6.95		
Mining	1,231.08				UP14.60		
OIL	1.71				UNCH 0.00		
All Shares Index	817.70				DOWN 4.18		
Composite	1,475.11				UP24.15		
NO. OF ADVANCES: 35; NO. OF DECLINES: 13; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 35; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 83; NO. OF TRADES: 2,030							
CURRENCIES							
Jan. 4, 2000	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US\$	Foreign currency in Peso			
Country							
United States	Dollar	1.077702	1.000000	51.0250			
Japan	Yen	0.009487	0.008803	0.4492			
United Kingdom	Pound	1.604807	1.489100	75.9813			
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.138170	0.128208	6.5418			
Switzerland	Franc	0.660762	0.613121	31.2845			
Canada	Dollar	0.719236	0.667379	34.0530			
Singapore	Dollar	0.623778	0.578804	29.5335			
Australia	Dollar	0.605995	0.562303	28.6911			
Bahrain	Dinar	2.858779	2.652661	135.3522			
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.287395	0.266674	13.6077			
Brunei	Dollar	0.620261	0.575540	29.3666			
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000105	0.0055			
Thailand	Baht	0.024719	0.022937	1.1703			
UAE	Dirham	0.293452	0.272294	13.8933			
Korea	Won	0.000849	0.000788	0.0400			
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.927900	47.3466			
Germany	Deutsch	0.511292	0.474428	24.2077			
France	Franc	0.152450	0.141457	7.2177			
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.421063	21.8484			
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.067433	3.4400			
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.023002	1.1733			
Italy	Lire	0.168188	0.156062	7.9633			
Finland	Markka	0.168185	0.156062	7.9633			
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004628	0.2366			
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005577	0.2844			
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.023002	1.1733			
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.17819	60.1173			

Erap's feng shui

PROBABLY due to the influence of Chinoy Walking Wallets that surround and fawn over him, Asiong Salonga/Jose Velarde has also been infected by their fascination with feng shui and numerological implications.

So what does the ancient Chinese almanac have in store for AS/JV for the year of the snake? Not good. Worrisome, even.

Based on the 2001 feng shui diary of Victor Dy of the Renaissance Research Institute for Asian Studies, Asiong Salonga could very well use his reputed *aning-aning* to reverse his skidding fortunes that would hound him for most of the year.

"Your fortune is weak," the diary said, referring to the 2001 prospects for bulls like you-know-who. "You must accumulate for the rainy days ahead and refrain from getting involved in altercations or arguments that can lead to litigation." (This warning may be a little too late.) "Practice meditation and be tolerant," it advised.

Even the first month of the year seemed not particularly auspicious, based on the Chinese chart.

"This is not a favorable month for you," the diary warned. "Be careful in handling metallic objects for you might be accident-prone. Be careful in driving."

But the bulls' fortunes (those born on 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973 and 1985) would turn positive in February, right after the impeachment hearings, according to the feng shui diary.

"Female oxen can conceive a baby boy. Ox's fortune is strong but avoid petty arguments," it said.

But their fortunes would resume their negative vibrations in March.

"Your fortune is weak and so is your health. Have more rest and avoid the sick."

The prospects for May, the election month, are quite amusing and even looked specifically tailored to you-know-who: "A good month to strengthen your financial position. Avoid going out late in the evening."

Maceda's machinations

AT the height of protest rallies late last year, Malacañang warned government officials and employees from attending either pro- or anti-Erap rallies.

The circular also warned the public sector employees from using government vehicles and funds for these political activities.

So what was Ambassador Ernesto Maceda doing leading the raucous pro-Erap rally on Jan. 2 at the Senate, hitting even the perceived anti-Erap senators?

Those who are still too young to remember

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin



who Maceda is and to what depths he could go to, listen to what former New York Times correspondent Raymond Bonner, a US Marine officer and a lawyer before he turned to journalism, said in his book, "Waltzing With A Dictator."

"Two weeks before the (1969) election, Marcos' campaign manager, Ernesto Maceda, withdrew P100 million. Then, with an Air Force plane and military security, he hopped around the islands, dispensing peso-filled envelopes: Barrio captains received P2,000 to P3,000, mayors up to P100,000, and favored congressional candidates as much as a million pesos."

"We were prepared to cheat all the way," Maceda said in an interview many years later.

Short takes

• EVEN dentists now have politics infecting their root canals. The Philippine Dental Association has also sought accreditation as a sectoral party for the party-list elections.

• A GROUP of New York-based eye specialists, led by Antonio Gonzales of Columbia University, has decided to postpone their SaveSight Mission scheduled for next month due to the bombings and the unsettled political situation.

The American doctors were scheduled to perform eye operations, gratis with corresponding free medicine, for rural indigents.

Heard through the grapevine

BANGKO Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura will host the traditional New Year's cocktails for bank presidents tonight.

His long-time companion, painter Marivic Rufino, will also attend the affair, in her first official capacity as Mrs. Rafael Buenaventura.

The two managed to tie the knot overseas during the holidays.

The wedding had initially been scheduled in Paris earlier last year, timed with the President's European visit and with no less than Mr. Estrada himself as ninong/witness but the hush-hush arrangement went to naught after Mr. Estrada cancelled the trip.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

BSP seen trimming key rates following Fed cut

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday it might cut overnight interest rates by up to one percentage point after the US Federal Reserve reduced a benchmark interest rate by half a point.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the Fed's decision, which came four weeks ahead of a scheduled rate policy meeting, would boost the peso and give monetary policymakers more flexibility to cut domestic interest rates.

"The (Fed) cut is quite big; maybe we could almost go for a one-percentage-point cut in our overnight rates," said Buenaventura.

"The Fed cut is good for us. It gives us more flexibility. Whether 50 or 100

(bps), we're going to discuss it," he said.

The US Federal Reserve cut federal funds overnight lending rate by 50 basis points to 6 percent in a shock move on Wednesday.

The Philippines overnight borrowing rate now stands at 13.5 percent and the lending rate at 15.75 percent. The central bank's Monetary Board holds its regular meeting on Friday.

Central bank policymakers will meet today to discuss a possible cut in overnight interest rates. The meeting was originally scheduled for Thursday.

Buenaventura said it would still be up to the Monetary Board to make the final decision about a rate cut. "I don't know if we will do it this Friday," he said.

He said inflation figures to be announced today would determine what

action the board would take. The central bank expects inflation to settle to between 6.5 percent and 7 percent for December and a full-year average of 4 percent to 4.3 percent.

The peso fell to a record low of 52 per US dollar on Tuesday after a week-end bombing spree killed 16 people and wounded more than a hundred in the worst violence to hit the city in a decade. It fell again to 51.04 to the US dollar yesterday.

The central bank cut overnight rates by 1.5 percentage points in December, offsetting a four percentage point increase implemented in October to stem the slide in the peso in the wake of corruption allegations against President Estrada. *With reports from Bloomberg, Reuters*

Mitsumi to expand CD-R plant

By GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

MITSUMI Electric Co. Ltd. of Japan, the world's biggest maker of computer peripherals, is investing some P497 million to expand its compact disc-rewritable drive factory inside its 20-year-old plant at the Bataan special economic zone.

Based on its application with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, Mitsumi, through wholly owned subsidiary Mitsumi Philippines Inc., is planning to expand by 91 percent its plant's projected capacity. Mitsumi invested over P35 million in a CD-R device project in September 1997.

The expansion project, which will begin this month, is expected to generate an

average sales turnover of around P761 million and profits of P147.517 million over the next five years.

Mitsumi plans to ship incremental capacity to Japan, Malaysia, North America, Europe and Hong Kong. The project will generate about \$15.102 million in net foreign exchange earnings and create 2,022 jobs.

This will be Mitsumi's third major investment in less than two years. The company pumped about P544.24 million in a voice port telecom device project in May 1999. Late last year, Mitsumi spent P750 million to put up an assembly plant to manufacturer electric adaptors for mobile phones.

Peza disclosed, however, that Mitsumi had aborted at least three projects it registered with the agency: a P93-million CD-ROM drive project in 1995; a P64-million project for ultra-high capacity floppy disc drives and high-speed color scanners in 1997; and, a DVD-ROM project in 1999.

Peza ruled that Mitsumi was not entitled to income tax holiday perks that were among the incentives for expansion projects because it only had a capacity utilization of 25 percent, just a fraction of the mandatory 85 percent capacity utilization limit.

Mitsumi has a total of 26 plants in 11 countries—it also has a factory Cebu—and its total worldwide sales stood at \$2.2 billion a year.

EasyCall plans P100-M Internet offering

PAGING operator EasyCall Communications Philippines Inc. said Wednesday it planned to raise P100 million through a public offering to finance its Internet business.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, EasyCall said the shares to be

offered would come from an increase in its authorized capital stock to P200 million from P100 million.

"Proceeds from the offering shall largely be used to fund the future investment needs of the Internet business infrastructures, particularly on hardware up-

grading, e-business software acquisitions and data center facilities expansion," EasyCall said.

The rest of the money raised will be used to purchase additional equipment for its call center and data businesses. *Anthony O. Alcantara*

Prosperity.Com bullish

PROSPERITY.COM said the mass marketing and electronic commerce sectors would buck prevailing prognoses of downward economic trends early this year.

Prosperity.Com president Vicente Co Chien Jr. said the company remained optimistic its sales and financial performance would continue to register a high growth rate "since our core business is anchored on entrepreneurial activities."

Co Chien said entrepreneurs have traditionally defied adverse economic conditions due to their flexibility, innovativeness and adaptability.

"Both our primary markets and our sales forces belong to the entrepreneurial sector," Co Chien said.

Prosperity.Com leads the local mass marketing sector both in sales force growth and revenues. It helps its clientele set up, maintain and upgrade personal and business websites.

Co Chien said the company expects local business activities through the Web to perk up next year. He said this was because economic difficulties tended to trigger the rise of entrepreneurial ventures.

"People will not simply sit down and wait for better times. They will look for ways to survive and prosper during hard times," Co Chien said.

The growing reliance of the public on the Internet for business transactions has opened new avenues for entrepreneurs to market their products and services, Co Chien added.

Labor Management Forum

(From page B2)

prevent retrenchments brought about by an economic crisis. The law of supply and demand takes precedence over the Labor Code. Therefore, job security should be redefined to stand on competence.

The challenge on the government is no longer to coerce employers to reinstate workers even if not economically viable. The thrust is to build capability through relevant and continuing training and development.

Overhaul the Labor Code

As we face the new century and millennium, it is imperative that we brace ourselves for massive, rapid and complex changes in technology, politics, socio-

economy and culture at a speed and velocity that can disorient and even terrorize us. Our Labor Code is designed to face such future shock that Alvin Toffler warned us decades ago.

We are faced with a 21st century of "Third Wave" challenges and we are using an outdated legal framework that has not prepared us for a "Powershift." To brighten up the prospects of 2001, let us hurry up with the Revised Labor Code with the latest provision to make us face the emerging times with enough courage and confidence.

Much is to be done and too little is the time to do all of them. Let's move now and start the decade right. Let us help Secretary Laguesma, NLRC chair Señeres and NCMB administrator Magsalin in pushing the labor front to better times in 2001.

Happy New Year!

TREAT FOR TWO TO SINGAPORE

Surprise your loved ones with an early summer holiday treat this January to March with two exciting tour offerings in and around New Asia.

You can avail of an exotic three-day/two-night Cruise Package from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur and the popular coastal town of Port Dickson in Malaysia on-board the Superstar Virgo, a premiere luxury floating resort. Priced at only \$999 for two persons, the package includes roundtrip Manila-Singapore economy airfare on Singapore Airlines,

cabin accommodation and full-board meals. Sailing days are every Wednesday. As a Valentine treat, passengers who are sailing on February 7, 14 and 21 have the option of leaving Manila a day earlier and enjoy a free one-night stay in Singapore, together with hotel accommodations and airport/hotel transfer.

Superstar Virgo is the newest and largest mega-ship in the Asia-Pacific region. The pride and joy of Star Cruises, it can accommodate up to 2,000 passengers, and has a variety of facilities for non-stop entertainment, dining, sports and

business activities. The luxury liner features 16 restaurants and food outlets, gym and spa, swimming pools, fun and game arcades, discos, state-of-the-art cinema, auditorium, library and a modern business center.

Now for those who want to simply enjoy the Lion City, they can take advantage of the four-day/three night Singapore Package at \$799 for two. The package includes roundtrip Manila-Singapore economy airfare on Singapore Airlines, hotel accommodation, daily breakfasts, roundtrip airport/hotel transfers, with a choice of three of the

following: the City Experience Tour, Singapore River Boat Tour, and admissions to the Singapore Zoological Gardens, Night Safari, Jurong Bird Park, Underwater World (Sentosa) and Images of Singapore (also in Sentosa). The first 300 passengers of this package can claim a free limited-edition Swatch watch.

The above offers are valid from January 16 to March 21, 2001. Book early for your choice of departure dates. For more details or to make your bookings, please contact your travel agents or the SIA Tours Desk at 751-5151/52 or 810-4960 ext. 4005/4006.

ADVT.

2 SEA

3-DAY / 2-NIGHT CRUISE FROM \$999*

Cruise from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur & Port Dickson aboard SuperStar Virgo • Full-board meals • Roundtrip economy airfare on Singapore Airlines

Special Valentine offer: depart Manila on February 6, 13 & 20 and enjoy one (1) free night stay in Singapore

4-DAY / 3-NIGHT SINGAPORE FROM \$799*

Hotel accommodation • Daily breakfast • Roundtrip airport transfers • Choice of 3 tours

FREE Swatch watches (Limited to first 300 passengers) • Roundtrip economy airfare on Singapore Airlines

FOR 2 PERSONS

FOR 2 PERSONS

Please contact your travel agent for more information or bookings.

* Prices based on twin-share * Valid 16 January - 21 March 2001 * Surcharge applies for certain cruise departure dates * Cabin / room upgrades & stay extensions available * Other conditions apply

People, Events & Products

REZ GOPEZ-SINDAC, Editor

5 NGOs receive awards from Ericsson

FIVE charitable and non-profit organizations from Australia, Fiji, South Africa and the United States received awards for their innovative ideas on how Internet technology can be used to improve life for the individuals and communities they serve.

These NGOs are winners of the Ericsson Internet Community Award (ERICA), a program developed by Ericsson to provide non-profit and charitable organizations with the resources and inspiration for using technology to further their mission. The five winners are: The Fiji School of Medicine, Fiji; The Gould League, Australia; National Downs Syndrome Society, USA; Pathways Community

Network, USA; and Rhodes University Mathematics Education Project, South Africa. Each winner receives \$10,000 in web development services from Ericsson's Internet Solutions division to turn their ideas into reality.

"We were delighted that Ericsson chose to hold the awards ceremony in connection with the Creating Digital Dividends conference." In addition to fulfilling the Internet dreams of the five winners, ERICA provides information to non-profit and charitable organizations through discussion forum, monthly newsletters and webcasts on the ERICA website.

"Today, hundreds of thousands of people depend upon the services and

support of non-profit and charitable organizations," says Jennifer Hillborn, Ericsson's corporate citizenship manager. "ERICA empowers these organizations with the tools and resources to better utilize technology and to deliver their services more economically, more efficiently and to a wider range of people. The goal of the ERICA program is not only to build new Internet applications, but to serve as a vehicle to maximize the power of the Internet to foster, explore and share visionary ideas."

More than 700 applicants from 39 countries submitted ideas online at <http://www.ericsson.com/ERICA> for this year's prize.



PANA CONVENTION SPONSOR

Pre-need industry pioneer College Assurance Plan (CAP) recently sponsored the Philippine Association of National Advertisers' (PANA) Marketing Communications Award for college students which was conferred during the organization's convention held Nov. 22-24, 2000 at the Manila Hotel. Signing the contract are (seated, from left) Bobby Banaag, CAP VP Marissa N. Dames, PANA president Angelica Suiza, and PANA director Beth Flores. Looking on are (from left) PANA VP Suzie Achacoso, Glig Rodriguez and Fely Fernandez.



MOBILE INTERNET DEV'T ALLIANCE

Diversified Financial Network Inc. (DFNN.com), the country's first public Internet technology company and Ericsson, the global leader in mobile Internet, recently signed an agreement to develop services for the wireless web. The companies intend to work together in the development, testing and delivery of applications utilizing Ericsson wireless application protocol (WAP) tool kit and mobile phones for DFNN.com's audience of business and finance movers worldwide. Present at the contract signing are (from left) Ericsson Communications manager Tess Avelino, Ericsson director for market development and communications Mona Magno-Veluz, DFNN.com marketing manager Mylo Bonifacio and DFNN.com New Media sales consultant Tehlin Yang.

Christmas boon for thrifty shoppers

IF YOU THOUGHT bankers were more like Scrooge than Santa, think again.

Bankard, Inc., the credit card company with the widest range of products is offering a monthly installment rate as low as 1.6 percent for an 18-month installment purchase of P5,000 and above with free first month amortization through Bankard One's First Give Forgive promo which runs until Jan. 31, 2001.

Bankard One is accepted at all major appliance, furniture, computer shops and supermarkets. It needs no signature, no card verification, no charge slip with a choice of installment terms - 3, 6, 9, 12, 18, 24 or 30 months.

Current Bankard One cardholders can call Bankard Phone Center at 634-6644 to request the pre-issued Bankard One Personal Identification Number (PIN) if they still don't have it. With their Bankard One and their

PINs, cardholders can now visit any affiliated store to do their Christmas shopping.

Meanwhile, holders of other Bankard cards can easily acquire their Bankard One cards through the Fast Apply Program. They simply have to call Bankard Phone Center and request for a Bankard One Information sheet. After completing the form, this can be sent via fax to 634-6624 for fast application processing. There is no annual fee. The Bankard One promo is also open to non-Bankard cardholders.

Now on its 26th year of service, Bankard, Inc. remains the industry leader in credit card innovations. It now has a card base of over 300,000 with more than 25,000 accredited establishments nationwide accepting its wide range of cards - Bankard MF1, Bankard MasterCard, Bankard Visa, Bankard One and Bankard E-Cash.



HOG GENETIC CENTER

Establishment of a semen center to improve local swine genetics will be undertaken by the Bureau of Animal Industry and the Bulacan provincial government in cooperation with the National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc. The project is expected to upgrade the quality of hog production in the country. Shown during the discussion of the project are (seated, from left) Consuelo P. Mangubat, chief of Livestocks Development Council Programs and Planning Office; Dr. Teodoro Albay, BAI director; Nemesis G. Co., NFHFI national chair; Dr. Frank Gulinao, Bulacan provincial veterinarian; Pablo Ocampo, Makamasa director. Standing from left are Dr. Hospicio Timbol, Dr. Alberto Legaspi of BAI; Alebert T. Lim, Jr., HFHFI vice chair for Visayas; Raymond S. Siguenza, NFHFI executive secretary and Laureano L. Abesamis, NFHFI corporate secretary and general legal counsel.



GOTO KING OPENS IN BIG R SUPER CENTER

Teresa Dula-Laurel, owner and general manager of Goto King (second from left) presents a copy of its Operation Manual to Dr. Gerson Valles of GR & L Partners after signing a franchise agreement that allows GR & L Partners to operate a Goto King outlet at the Big R Super Center in Novaliches. Also in photo are (from left) Deus de la Cruz, business development officer of Goto King; Ligaya Bongyad and Rosalie Dinh, associates of GR & L Partners. Goto King specializes in Filipino food.



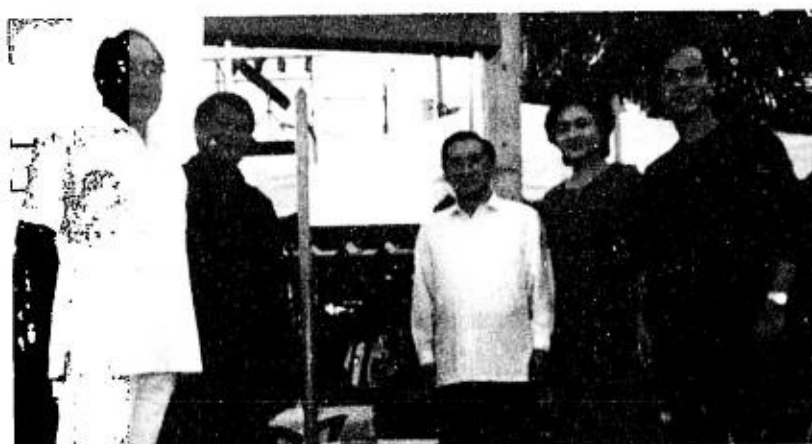
BRANCH INAUGURATION

Cocoplans, one of the country's top pre-need firms and a member of the UCPB Group of Companies, recently inaugurated its Alabang branch office. Shown during the blessing rites with the officiating priest are (front row, from left) Henry Reyes, city administrator, Muntinlupa City; Liza Tuatiz-Flores, branch manager; Caesar T. Michelena, senior vice president and general manager; (back row, from left) Dario B. Martinez, first vice president; Levi O. Michelena, division head; and Alex L. Flores, assistant vice president.



OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS SERVICE PROVIDER

Ramon Flores, ABU ways and means co-chair represents the Kapisanan ng mga Brodcaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) in the signing with Lyn Ventenilla, advertising and promotions manager (center) and Paul Puzon, product manager of Fuji Xerox (right) as the official documents service provider of the recently concluded 37th Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union general assembly last Nov. 2 to 10, 2000 at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City.



ABS-CBN OFFICERS INAUGURATES EUGENIO LOPEZ STREET

In a quiet ceremony last Dec. 18, ABS-CBN's top brass (from left) ABS-CBN vice chair lawyer Jake Almada-Lopez, ABS-CBN president and COO Federico M. Garcia, Lopez Group of Companies chair Oscar M. Lopez, ABS-CBN EVP Charo Santos-Concio and ABS-CBN chair and CEO Eugenio Lopez III lead the dedication of Eugenio Lopez Street in Quezon City. Eugenio Lopez Street, the portion of which was formerly known as Scout Albano Street from EDSA to its intersection with Mother Ignacia Street flanking the ABS-CBN audience entrance, is named after ABS-CBN's late "Kapitan," entrepreneur, industrialist, media man and philanthropist Eugenio Lopez, Jr., from Quezon City Ordinance 2000-116, spearheaded by Mike Planas of the third district.



DBS RECEIVES AWARD

Fastech Synergy Ltd. recently awarded DBS Bank Philippines Inc. the Best Service Supplier Award during the Fastech Suppliers as Partners Day celebration held at the Dusit Hotel Nikko, Manila City. Shown are (from left) Gary Legarda of DBS Philippines, guest of honor Singapore ambassador to the Philippines Jacky Foo, Fastech managing director Charito Montemayor and Fastech chief executive officer Saturnino Belen Jr.



PAGE ONE AT THE POWER PLANT MALL

Page One The Bookshop, one of Asia's premier bookstores, has opened its flagship store at the ground level of the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell Center. The Singapore-headquartered bookstore offers over 50,000 titles, plus audio tapes, magazines and gift items from international publishers. Page One also has stores in Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Australia. Leading the ribbon cutting ceremony are (from left) Rockwell Land chair Manuel M. Lopez, Maritess Lopez, Page One The Bookshop Pte. Ltd. managing director Mark Tan, Philippine managing director Jaime Daez, Amelita Daez and Rockwell Land president Tong Padilla.

Australian on underwater photography

UNDERWATER photography, an exciting field where only few are known practitioners in the world, will be the topic of a well-known Australian photographer in Photoworld Manila 2001.

Gunther Delchmann will be one of the speakers in Photoworld Manila 2001, the biggest photography event in Southeast Asia, to be held on Jan. 24-31 at the Asian Institute of Management in Makati City.

Other highlights of the yearly event are the photo exhibit, trade fair, product demonstrations, and photographers night to be held at the Glorietta in Ayala Center.

Delchmann's first assignment in underwater photography was the Great Barrier Reef in Australia.

Seven years of award-winning environmental photography, which include the book Australia's Natural Wonders, has made him the natural choice for the job.

Purely self-taught in photography, he has won 12 awards in his first four years, and has earned the rank of Associate at the prestigious Australian Institute of Professional Photography in only three years.

In the Philippines, Gunther has photographed the underwater flora and fauna at Anilao, El Nido, Coron, Puerto Galera, Bohol and Cebu.

FFPP holds office at the 7th floor Comfoods Bldg., Sen Gil Puyat Ave. corner Chino Rocas Ave., Makati City, with telephone numbers 843-5341 and 813-7420 or at website www.photoworldmanila.com

Mensa testing

MENSA, the international society for people with high IQs, is holding a series of qualifying test sessions in the Philippines on Jan. 13, 2001. Mensa has over 100,000 members worldwide. Some of its more famous members include astrophysicist Stephen Hawking, Yehey's Alistair Israel, and actresses Sharon Stone and Geena Davis. It's only requirement for qualifying is to score in the top two percent of a certified standard IQ test. It is now hoping to broaden its base of members locally. The qualifying test sessions shall begin at 1 p.m. and will be held at The Coca-Cola Room, ACCEED Training Center, Asian Institute of Management, Makati City. The test is P400 (P150 for students). For inquiries and reservations, please contact Janet Villa at 746-0208, Spencer Yap at 564-3209 or Bella Bengco at 732-9193 or email mena@edsamail.com.ph or mena_ph@yahoo.com



A cyber homecoming

THE AQUINAS Alumni Association, Inc. batch 1976 celebrates its silver anniversary with the country's first-ever cyber reunion to be held on Jan. 27, 2001 at the Santuario del Sto. Cristo Church Patio, Aquinas School, San Juan Metro Manila. The event is tagged as "Aquinas... The Cyber Homecoming."

This event is a Concert-Cocktails night for an estimated 2000 people. It has live bands, which include Color It Red, Danny Crisologo and his 21-piece orchestra. The party also boasts of having the first-ever on-line communication with Aquinians around the globe via large-screen set-ups and a specialized computer hook-up.

This event will be graced by movie and TV personalities, government officials and known figures in society who were former Aquinians themselves. "Aquinas... The Cyber Homecoming" is a fund-raising activity for the benefit of the Aquinians Alumni Scholarship Fund and Aquinas Alumni Employee Assistance Program. For details and tickets, please contact the AAA Secretariat through Jojo Diaz at 842-4612/0917-4354644/ telefax 723-6755; Nick Bunyi at 724-5466 to 69 and Deux Advertising at 913-8991/0919-4108322/1277-33188.

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OBITUARIES

Jesus said: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I solemnly assure you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it produces much fruit."

John 12:23-24

The Board of Directors, Officers, and Employees of EASYCALL COMMUNICATIONS PHILS., INC.

announced with deep sorrow that our
 Founder, Former Director and Former President

FRANCISCO N. CERVANTES, SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 02, 2001.

His remains lie in state at the Don Bosco Chapel, Pasay Road, Makati City.

His loving wife **Rosario**; children **Modesto & Patricia**, **Edilberto (†) & Herminia**, **Elias & Cynthia**, **Lamberto (†) & Presentacion**, **Francisco Jr. & Cynthia**, **German Sr. & Pilar**, **Victor & Imelda**; and grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 07, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the eight o'clock morning Mass.

In Loving Memory

on the First Death Anniversary of our Beloved

Natividad Valera Siy

January 5, 2001

*We miss your wonderful cooking.
 We remember your generosity,
 your kind and loving heart.
 You are gone but never forgotten.
 May God keep you in the palm of His hand.*

*From all the people who love you.
 Your husband Peter;
 son Pepeling and wife Anne;
 daughter Lolotte and husband Luis;
 family, relatives and friends.*

Masses will be offered today at the following Churches:

Our Lady of Lourdes Church Kalaan, Quezon City	5:30 a.m.; 6:30 a.m.; 6:00 p.m.
Sta. Teresita Parish Mayon, Quezon City	7:00 a.m.; 6:00 p.m.
Sto. Domingo Church Quezon Avenue, Quezon City	7:00 a.m.; 6:00 p.m.
Immaculate Conception Parish Cubao, Quezon City	7:00 a.m.
Sta. Rita Parish-Philam Homes Quezon City	7:00 a.m.
Binondo Chinese Parish Binondo	7:00 a.m.
Parish of the Resurreccion BF Homes, Parañaque	6:30 a.m.
Parish of the Presentation of the Child Jesus BF Homes, Parañaque	6:00 p.m.
Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish Ermita, Manila	7:30 a.m.
Malate Catholic Church Malate, Manila	7:00 a.m.
Hearts of Jesus and Mary Parish West Triangle, Quezon City	6:30 a.m.; 6:00 p.m.

*"Come to Me all you who are weary
 and burdened and I will give you rest."
 Matthew 11:21*

SOCORRO VARELA VDA. DE YAOKANA

Her loving children **Katherine, Marian, Joseph Jr. and Marissa, Isabel and Marlon, Veronica and Stella**; grandchildren, sisters **Milagros and Pilar**; brothers-in-law, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at St. Peter Memorial Chapels, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. There will be a worship service at 8:00 a.m. in the morning of Sunday, January 7, 2001 and cremation shall follow.

Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again.

2 Cor. 4:14

TIMOTEO B. BRION

of San Pablo City

*Died in the Grace of our Lord
 on 01 January 2001 at the age of 76.*

His loving spouse **AMNERIS**; children **MARIAN** and **CLARO ARELLANO**, **MARLENE** and **LOUIE LOANZON**, **MARLON** and **BENETTE BRION** and **MARICEL** and **JOJO LIRIO**; together with his grandchildren, relatives and friends request everyone to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Resurrection Chapel, San Pablo Cathedral, San Pablo City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 7, 2001 at San Gabriel Eternal Garden, San Pablo City after 1:00 p.m. Mass.

ENGR. JOSE ESPEJO LAVIN, SR.

*Peacefully joined his Creator and his
 loving wife ISIDORO (DOLAY)
 on January 3, 2001 at the age of 93.*

His loving children **Pepito and Perling**, **Vicenting** and **Marichu**, **Oscar** and **Ethel**, **Lita** and **Ricky**, **Vickie** and **Felix**, **Mayo** and **Luchi**, **Marissa** and **Bobby**, **Maribel** and **Conrad**; sisters **Nena** and **Bading**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, other relatives and friends request pious readers to pray for his eternal repose.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa, Kalookan City.

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CAYETANO BAUTISTA LALIC

of Macabebe, Pampanga

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 1, 2001
at the age of 78.

His wife, GERONIMA LAXA LALIC; children LETICIA and SISENANDO SANTOS, LIBERATO and ESTELITA, LORNA and MARIO NAVAL, LENGIM and JOCELYN, LOYOLA and VINCENT MALLARI, LIZA and VERNIE LIWANAG, LILIBETH and JUNE LU; grandchildren, brothers and sisters ROMULO, FR. PAUL, FELICIANO and JOVITA, FORTUNATA, TERESITA, DOMINADOR, SMA. FRANCISCA and REMEDIOS; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 6, 2001 at Evergreen Memorial Garden, Pasig City, after the 1:00 PM Mass.

FRANCISCO N. CERVANTES, SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 02, 2001
at the age of 87.

His bereaved wife Rosario; children Herminia and Bert (†) Perez, Modesto and Tita, Presing and Ambet (†) Gatmaitan, Herman and Pilar, Vic and Imelda, Bebing and Ely Posa, Boy and Cynthia; grandchildren, sisters, brothers, relatives and friends request the pious readers to join them in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Don Bosco Chapel, Pasay Road, Makati City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 07, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the eight o'clock morning Mass.

*Whoever finds his life will lose it,
and whoever loses his life
for my sake will find it.*

Matthew 10:39

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me".
John 14:6

PIN GIAH NG TIUTAN

Died in the Grace of our Lord on 02 January 2001 at the age of 76.

Her loving spouse TAN SUY (TIU SIONG DIO); children Thomas & Annie, Tony (†), Mariano & Vicky, Richie & Marlo, Josie & Ernie Rodriguez, Robert & Bel, Cesar & Malu, and Mike & Esther; together with her grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request everyone to pray for the eternal repose of her soul and to rejoice with us at her return to our Creator.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel along Araneta Avenue in Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, 07 January 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque at 9:00 AM.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

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CLASSIFIEDS

INQUIRER RiViA By BONG BARRAMEDA

Face the music

Q. Why do we say *face the music* to mean acceptance of the consequences, however unpleasant?

A. There are two popular theories—one military, the other theatrical. According to the military theory, a soldier being punished or an officer being cashiered would have to stand in front of a band and listen to the tapping of a drum while his misdemeanors were read out for all his comrades to hear, and his punishments administered or insignia torn. The theatrical theory is equally plausible. The orchestra in theaters is traditionally positioned in the 'pit' between the stage and the audience. For an inexperienced actor waiting backstage or in the wings, it must be a nerve-wracking prospect having to go on-stage and finally *face the music*.

Classified Odd. In 1994, when a jury in Gastonia, North Carolina, left the courtroom to deliberate the sexual assault case against a 52-year-old man, the defendant fled. 'Apparently he was more impressed with the evidence than the jury was,' assistant district attorney Mike Kromis said after the jury returned a verdict of *not guilty*.

Past Forward. This day in 1919: An Austrian-born former soldier named Adolf Hitler founded the National Socialist German Workers' Party, popularly known as the Nazi Party, in Munich, and provided it with a program that mixed fascism with anti-Semitism. The originally tiny political faction would eventually rule Germany under Hitler (1933-1945).

WORD WATCH

Pulitika: ultimately, from the Greek *ta politika*, 'affairs of state.'

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BUSINESS Friday

MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

For as long as there are OFWs, travel agency mart will thrive

BY TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

NATURE'S decision to make the Philippines an archipelago is a boon to the travel industry. Many people have no choice but to ride a plane or a boat to get to another part of the country.

Add to this the considerable number of executives and businessmen, balikbayans and the overseas Filipino workers who travel to and from the Philippines.

The Negoskwa Livelihood and Technology Training Center says the big travel market makes it lucrative for budding entrepreneurs to consider putting up a travel agency business to earn extra income.

Marie Therese M. Zamora, Negoskwa's resource speaker for the travel agency business, says entrepreneurs need to raise P500,000 in paid-up capital to start the business.

Other costs include fees for government registrations, office forms as well as office rental, communication, advertising and promotions, utilities and sales and administrative staff.

Zamora explains that the returns can be significant depending on the location, focus and marketing expertise of the travel agency.

Travel agencies earn money through sales commissions and services. Sales come in through airlines, hotels, resorts, domestic shipping lines, luxury cruise lines, car rental and even the National Tourism Board.

Services, on the other hand, include documentation for passport, visa and immigrations, travel reservations, ticketing and hotel or re-

sort accommodations.

Travel agencies can likewise earn from land arrangements such as city tours, bookings in restaurants and special cultural shows. An alternative market includes selling of package tours, transportation arrangement, tour guiding, airport assistance and cruise selling.

Cruise packages are among the biggest sources of revenues for a travel agency. Each transaction approximately costs P12,000. International tickets, on the other hand, bring in between P400 and P2,000 per transaction while local tour packages cost as much as P1,800.

Basic documentation and visa assistance, on the other hand, cost about P400 while revenue from sale of domestic tickets run up to about P250.

Zamora says there are different markets that travel agencies can focus on to develop a niche in the competitive travel industry.

The leisure/tourist market is one of the primary markets for the travel agency followed by corporate clients and business travelers.

Because of the big number of OFWs, these have become one of the biggest sources of revenue for travel agency. A far second are the immigrant market, religious travels, inbound tourist and the student markets.

Negoskwa suggests that the budding entrepreneur can get a head start in the business by organizing group travels, developing inbound tourist, participate in travel marts and set up sub agents to bring in more business to the agency. For more information please call Negoskwa at 9245111/9242102/9242105.

How To

Women in search of a venture find a slice of success in pizza

JUNE, Marilyn and Lourdes Ramirez were three ladies on the lookout for a good business venture. Specifically, they wanted to go into the food business—the kind that did not require millions in capital.

Things started to fall into place when they noticed how much Little Caesars' Pizza they were having delivered to their home every week and how it had become a perennial favorite. They were ordering Little Caesars for lunch, dinner and merienda.

"Why not a Little Caesars' outlet?" asked June. The trio lost no time in going to the nearest branch where they asked the manager how to go about getting a Little Caesars' franchise.

"Why not a Little Caesars' dealership?" suggested the store manager. "No franchise fee, no royalty charges and very minimal investment."

"And that was how we learned about the Little Caesars' Dealership program. I saw my sister Marilyn's face lit up when it was explained to us that for as little as P20,000 we could be a Little Caesars dealer," said June. This was exactly the kind of alternative business opportunity we were looking for."

Under the program, anyone who has an existing business located just 15 minutes away from a Little Caesars store can be granted a dealership.

"We want to bring Little Caesars' closer to the customers anytime, anywhere so we are encouraging all kinds of store owners to become dealers," informed Ace Samonte of Asia Food Franchising Corp., a subsidiary of RFM.

"It doesn't really matter whether your business is in a jeepney terminal, the pier, the airport, canteen, country clubs, in a mall or supermarket as long as its near a Little Caesars store," he said.

"Dealers can choose between two concepts: For P25,000 one can have the Counter Top Merchandise which is perfect if you have an existing counter or store and your looking for additional food products to sell. Then there is the Full Cart at P75,000 which is ideal if you have an available space that can fit a 1 x 2 meter cart in areas with high foot traffic."

"For both concepts, Little Caesars' will deliver to the dealers cooked pizza from a host store that is a maximum of 15 minutes drive away. Dealers can then sell the pizza per slice or accept pizza delivery order by the box. The dealers on the other hand are given a big margin of profit because of the discounted rates they enjoy as Little Caesars' dealers," explained Ace.

The Ramirez sisters were impressed by the program that they opted for the Full Cart concept and signed up for it last August.

In less than a month after completing the requirements and going through a one-day seminar at Little



MARILYN, Lourdes and June Enriquez.

Caesars, the sisters opened the very first Little Caesars' Full Cart at the Ground Floor of North Ridge Mall along Congressional Avenue in Quezon City.

"We spent P75,000 for the Full Cart dealership. P70,000 is actually a bond for the cart and will be refunded to you when you return the cart. P5,000 went for the starter kit of thongs, napkin, wrappers, hot sauce, pizza screen.

Our cart has been operational for three months now and I'll have to say that we are doing just fine despite the crisis plaguing the country. We average 10 orders of Supreme and Hawaiian pizza a day. You have to remember that each order consists of two round pizzas which can be divided into 16 slices of pizza. That's about 160 slices a day at P25 to P28 per slice. Peak hours at the mall is from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. And it is mostly students and the younger set that buys from us."

"One thing good about being a Little Caesars dealer is the support you get from management. On opening day they took care of the streamer and fliers. Every now and then they would update us with their latest marketing gimmicks and provide us with fliers for that."

One time, June and I asked the head office if we can borrow a counter top merchandiser for the tangle we were joining. They lent us one no questions asked," narrated Marilyn.

"I know we can do better in terms of sales but considering the crisis plaguing the country now I can say we are still lucky. We're doing just fine and we are optimistic that the situation will change," ended June on an optimistic note.

Brazil joins leaders in recycling

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil—Brazilians don't pay deposits on containers, rarely separate their trash and think little of tossing an empty soda can from a car window. "Please Don't Litter" signs are roundly ignored.

Yet Brazil is poised to catch up with Japan as a leader among the world's biggest countries in recycling aluminum cans.

The reason is Luiz Carlos Carola, and a legion like him.

Carola was homeless when he started collecting cans outside the Rio bus station three years ago. Today, he has a roof over his head, spends his weekends at a modest beach resort outside the city and earns about \$260 a month—not bad money in a country where nearly half the people get by on \$150 a month or less.

"As long as there are ill-mannered people, I'll earn a good living," Carola says.

Ecological consciousness has been slow in coming to Brazil, where the poor have little education and the well-off have maids to pick up after them. Throw-away containers are tossed everywhere, and beachgoers think nothing of leaving a pile of garbage behind when they go home.

All the same, the Brazilian Aluminum Associa-

tion says the country should recycle 80 percent of the 9.5 billion aluminum cans sold in 2000. That would put them up with the current leader, Japan, which recycled 79 percent of its cans in 1999.

Some small European countries recycle almost 90 percent of their cans, but the association says Japan and Brazil are far ahead of other populous countries.

For instance, the United States recycled 63 percent of its cans in 1999. Still, the aluminum industry wants to move beyond reliance on the professional trash collectors. It is trying to teach more privileged Brazilians to recycle with an educational program directed at schools, churches, hotels and tenant associations.

The most aggressive of these efforts is headed by the aluminum can maker Latasa, which accounts for half of Brazil's can market and a fourth of all recycling. Today, 55 percent of Latasa's cans are made from recycled aluminum.

Latasa has 16,000 institutions involved in a program that awards cash and prizes in return for used cans. The company also has 47 recycling centers around Rio and Sao Paulo where collectors can sell aluminum for 1.55 reais a kilo (36 cents a pound) and also buy food at discount prices. AP

SMART MONEY

E-cash with a twist, or same old banana?

BY ANTHONY O. ALCANTARA

E-CASH again? Just when most people think it's the same old banana, Smart Communications Inc., one of the country's leading cellular phone companies, tries to offer something new to consumers and hopes to earn big bucks from it.

No doubt about the big bucks, especially when you're eyeing a market of P1.4 trillion of cash transactions a year. Just a fraction of that amount as payment for facilitating transactions is big enough indeed.

MARKETING STRATEGY

Called Smart Money, this e-cash product has been linked with the ubiquitous cellular phone.

Napoleon Nazareno, Smart president, says Smart Money is a result of adapting to the lifestyle of mobile Filipinos.

"We're targeting people who are after convenience, people with the mobile lifestyle. This is the first time in the world that a cash card is linked to a phone," he says.

This new product was developed by Smart in cooperation with its affiliate company 1st eBank and MasterCard International. Smart invested P280 million for the product and expects to generate P350 million within two years.

Unlike the usual e-cash cards, Smart Money allows people to replenish their cards wherever they are by just punching in the right codes and numbers on their cellular phones. This, provided they have an account with the accredited banks. Aside from 1st eBank, other banks include International Exchange Bank, Union Bank, Planters Bank, East-West Bank, Export Bank, Dao Heng Bank, Equitable PCIBank and Premiere Bank.

Existing Smart cellular phone subscribers can avail of the service by upgrading their SIM (subscriber identity module) cards to Smart Money-enabled SIM cards. They will also receive a Smart Money card similar to an ATM card or credit card that they could use for small cash transactions.

The users, however, will have to manually input the phone numbers in the old SIM card to the new card.

Nazareno says the market for Smart Money is different from the market for



OVER the past three years, many have attempted to market cash cards. Will this telecom firm succeed?

credit cards since e-cash involves only small cash transactions. Smart Money cards can be loaded with values of between P500 and P10,000.

Smart also targets people who can afford to have a cellular phone but do not have a credit card because they don't want to go through the hassles of applying for a card.

For Danilo C. Ibarra, head for Smart's e-services/Smart Money, there are many reasons why consumers will likely accept the new product instead of getting a regular credit card or using electronic cash cards offered by other companies.

"The E-cash cards that were introduced before do not have the infrastructure. There is no access to financial information unlike Smart Money. That's a very strong proposition," he explains.

With the use of their handset units, Smart Money users can check their bank account balances and Smart Money card balances anytime. Because e-cash cards were not linked with cellular phone before, users have no way of checking how much money they have left in their cards unless they try to purchase something with their cards.

Since the number of terminals is also a key factor in the success of any form of e-cash service, Ibarra says they already have Smart Money-enabled out-

lets. He claims about 90 percent of stores accepting MasterCard can already accept Smart Money payments.

Ibarra says most stores already have the electronic draft capture (EDC) terminals of MasterCard that can read Smart Money cards to process transactions.

He adds that there are about 13,000 to 15,000 establishments—including school canteens, movie houses and tiangges—that can accept Smart Money cards.

"Practically all of the stores in Glorietta, Robinson's and Megamall can now accept Smart Money payments," says Ibarra.

Smart's proposition is that people who pay cash in buying goods and availing of services can now do so electronically.

As an example, he points out that parents can control their children's spending by just transferring money to their children's Smart Money accounts or bank accounts. Smart Money would also be a safer way to do small transactions since everything is electronic.

Smart's Head of Usage Marketing Rene N. Ylanan says the firm is using a tri-media campaign to launch its product which is geared for various markets.

Ylanan says they have ads showing the Smart money can be used by firms for their sales people to budget representation expenses; or parents who want to control their children's expenditures.

IBM analyst from France tutors poor kids in Cebu

BY DENNIS M. ARROYO

HE calls himself a "little guy" but he stands about 6'5". Coming from cosmopolitan Paris, he has chosen to serve in Banawa Hills, Cebu, promoting computer training for the poor. A high-flying analyst of IBM, he now teaches poor children. He is Romain Allain-Dupre.

"Children are laughing and singing loudly outside," he writes in his e-mail. "They are so excited by the coming Christmas, its crib, its lights, its magic. How could I have believed one year ago that this present joy would have been my 2000 Christmas gift?"

Romain (pronounced Ro-MAN) is working on a scholarship program near Cebu City, and it covers 51 youth, aged 9 to 22 years old. And yet his French NGO manages with only three members. All the money for his group comes from sponsors in Europe.

With PCs and desktops, he is able to train the kids on computers. Romain is sharpening the skills of two particular scholars who will eventually take over his teaching service.

Analyst in IBM headquarters

Romain worked with the European and Middle East headquarters of IBM and managed a \$12.5-million budget for capital expenditures. That involved him with lots of chief financial officers.

Before joining IBM, he was an assistant senior consultant for Arthur Andersen Management in Paris. He also did market surveys for Hermes Pacific Ltd. in Hong Kong.

In 1997, while on a break from his Hong Kong work, he got to spend some time with poor children in the Philippines. "Since then I have asked God to give me the opportunity to be His instrument among such people."

Years later, as an IBM Financial Analyst in Paris, he thus took a leave of



ROMAIN Allain-Dupre takes a breather from handling millions and opts to promote computer training in the Philippines.

absence and went on to serve in Cebu.

Healing broken lives

"Step by step I have built personal relationships with the youths who are willing to grow despite their fears and their wounds," adds Romain. "Many are living in broken families with alcohol or drug addicted parents. Their standard of life is quite low."

None of the kids have access to piped water in their homes. Some are deprived of electricity. His team helps the youth not only with training and tuition but also with food and clothing. An important value he tries to impart is that of long-term planning.

"We also want to teach them to become responsible men and women, and to face life with realism and hope," says the Frenchman. "Some are tempted to shut themselves up in their poverty."

"Romain has a Master of Arts degree in international economics and finance from Brandeis University in Boston. He also has a Master of Science in Management from the University of Paris-Dauphine. Among his hobbies are going scuba diving, sailing, and trekking.

Joyful lifestyle

On Wednesday afternoons he takes some of the youth to the Missionaries of Charity, the order founded by Mother Teresa. There

they feed and play with the orphans under the care of the sisters. It is his way of nurturing the value of solidarity in the youth.

He says that his great joy is to visit the youths at their homes, to share meals with their families.

"I did not tell you about the dramas we have been preparing, the long walks all together in the mountains, sometimes barefoot, the swimming lessons I give in natural falls, the coconut parties I organized, our trips in the provinces, on the top of the roof of the local buses."

This social service is nothing new to Romain. He was a math tutor to poor children in Paris from 1993 to 1996. He was an organizer for the 4th Forum of Humanitarian Help and Development in the same city.

The computer whiz was a volunteer for the 12th World Youth Day held in France. He quotes Pope John Paul II: "There are none so poor they have nothing to give, and none so rich they have nothing to receive."

Romain wishes his friends a "holy Christmas" and dares them to risk crazy plans this coming year, "in the light of God."

Perhaps the Frenchman is not really marketing computer training for the poor. It may be more accurate to say that he is marketing a lifestyle of service. (Comments to <darrayo@philonline.com>)

LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor ■ MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ, Subsection Editor



C1

Which is the only A+ formula?
ASK YOUR PEDIATRICIAN TODAY.
Mead Johnson
Nutritional

ILLUSTRATIONS:
STEPH BRAVO

⇒ Acid-washed jeans with safety pins

⇒ Reconnect with the state of peacefulness that has always been at the heart of your being

Trends for 2001

- ⇒ Sequins
- ⇒ Gold chains
- ⇒ Chunky pendants
- ⇒ Studs and rhinestones
- ⇒ Metallic accessories
- ⇒ Glittery hair and body makeup
- ⇒ Blue and violet eyeshadows and clear lip gloss



⇒ Rips and tatters



⇒ Studded wide belts

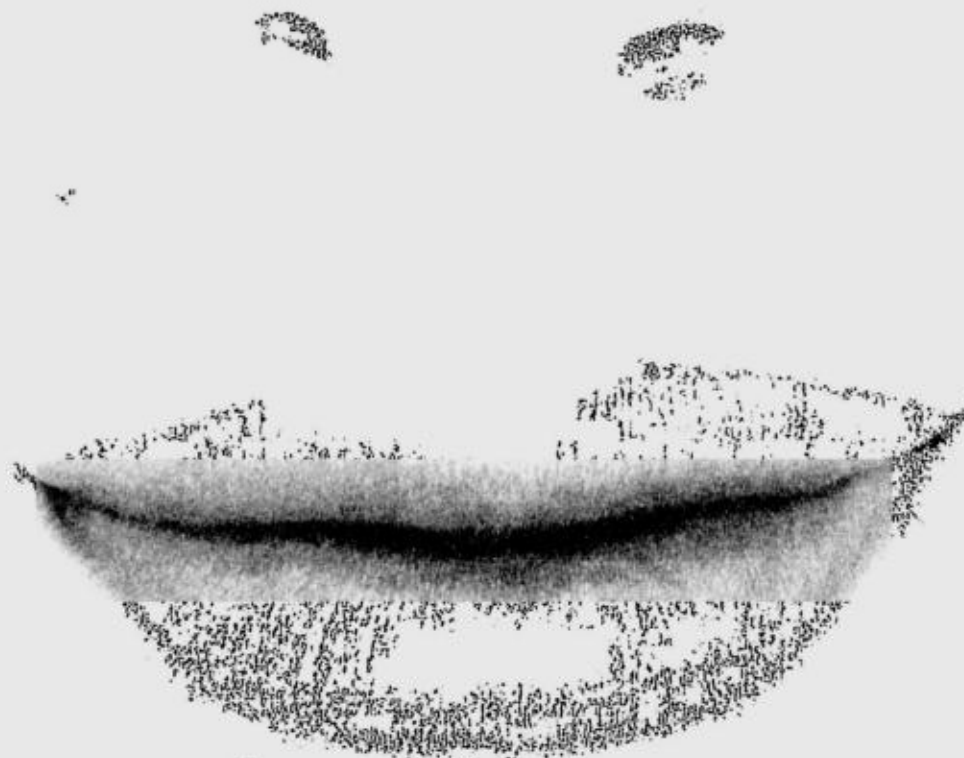


⇒ If aping the latest Western fashion is not your trip, go back to your Pinoy roots.

(More trends on C2, C4 and D1)



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PAGE DESIGN BY MARLONE RUBIO

A lot of spunk from punk

BY MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES REYES

BRING out your studded wide belts and wristbands, bondage pants and ripped, faded jeans. Punk is back.

"The 'punk-er,' the better," declares Paris-based fashion documentarian Francis Manalo in a long-distance telephone interview. Last year, he told INQUIRER that the silhouette of '80s was returning, starting with the widening of the shoulders. He also predicted the inundation of embellishments—all kinds of beadwork and embroidery. In 2001, the '80s trend continues with the punk look of recent memory. Pop icons such as David Bowie, Boy George, Annie Lennox, Billy Idol, Visage and U2 popularized the look and the attitude.

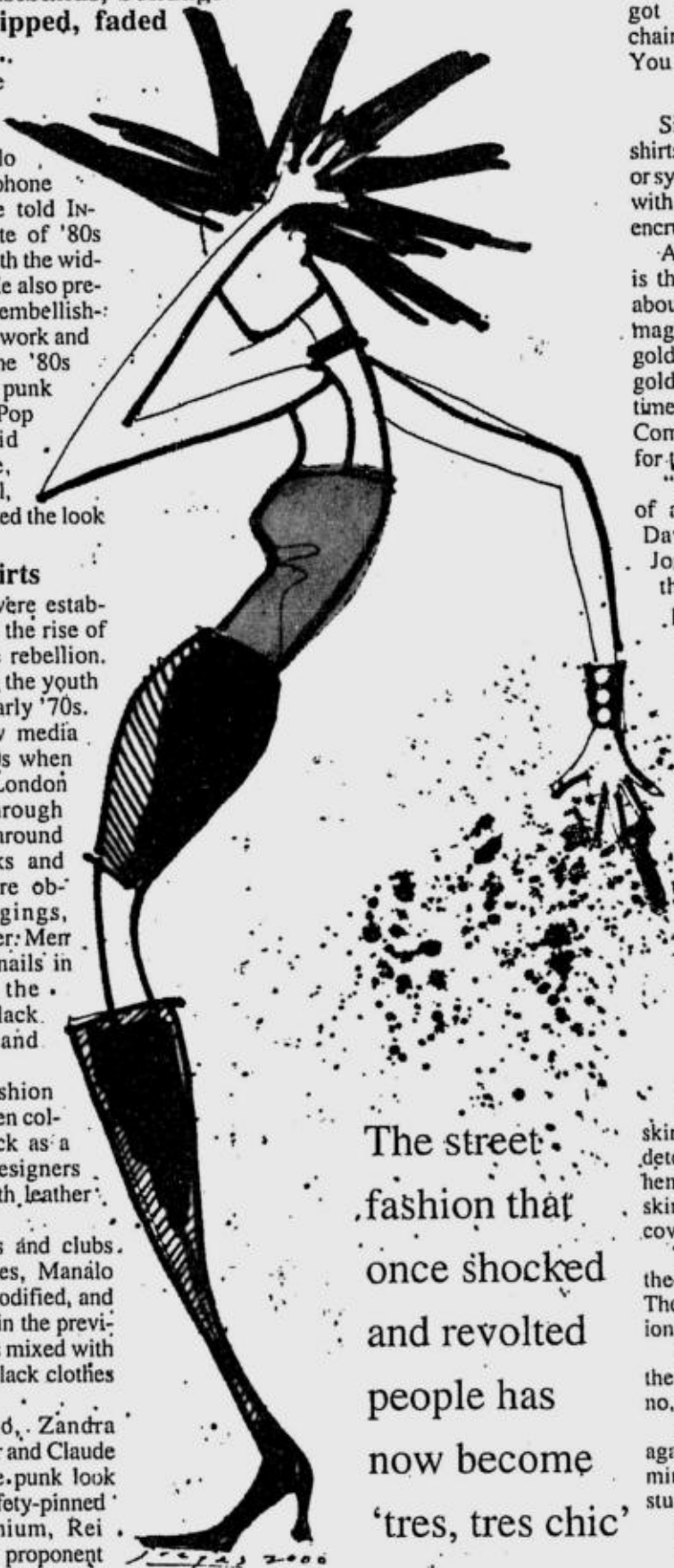
Obscene T-shirts

The roots of punk were established in the '50s, with the rise of gang cults and teenage rebellion. They were revived with the youth counter-culture in the early '70s. But punk fashion drew media attention in the late '70s when unemployed youths in London vented their anger through clothing. They walked around in neon-dyed mohawks and painted faces and wore obscene T-shirts, leggings, PVCs, rubber and leather. Men painted their lips and nails in dark colors while the women dressed up in black vinyl, ripped tights and studded dog collars.

This subculture fashion became mainstream when collections picked up black as a predominant color. Designers adorned the clothes with leather and chains.

In Parisian catwalks and clubs where fashion emanates, Manalo says the punk look is modified, and is not as hard-edged as in the previous era. Punk fashion is mixed with animal prints, elegant black clothes and denims.

Twenty years ago, Zandra Rhodes, Thierry Mugler and Claude Montana picked up the punk look by creating ripped, safety-pinned clothes. This millennium, Rei Kawakubo is the punk proponent by reviving the street look. Just



The street fashion that once shocked and revolted people has now become 'tres, tres chic'

about every fashion house has its version of the wide belts, the dangling chains and studs.

"In the Paris clubs, you're cool if you go punk, especially if you've got thick belts with spikes and chains. 'It's tres, tres à la mode. You are really sosyal,' he says.

Chunky pendants

Silk-screened and hand-painted shirts that mocked the establishment or symbolized death are accessorized with belts—as ample as 10 inches—encrusted with rhinestones and studs.

Another throwback of the '80s is the return of the metallics. Just about every lifestyle and fashion magazine heralded the return of gold. If you've been keeping your gold shoes and bags, now is the time to dust them off and wear them. Complementing the look is glitter for the hair and makeup.

"Gold is fabulous in the likes of accessories worn by Sammy Davies, James Brown and Tom Jones," says Manalo. Remember the '70s when guys wore shiny, printed shirts that were unbuttoned to show off their pecs and dangling gold necklaces? In London and Milan, those shirts are back; and the chains are longer and the pendants are chunkier. The gold is so glaring that you'd need to wear shades—preferably the Rayban kidney-shaped metal-framed styles in silver and gold. Thank goodness, the men's platform wasn't revived.

Short skirts

After the cold spell, skirts will get shorter. Baby boomers will recall how the nuns measured the skirt length by making them kneel to determine the distance between the hemline and the floor. In those years, skirts were just bands of fabrics that covered their souls.

The colors revert to the basics in the wheel—red, yellow and blue. These colors complement punk fashion.

When fashionistas learned about the '80s revival, they groaned, "Oh no, not again!"

Manalo says, "Never say, 'Never again!'" You just might change your mind and you'll be strutting in those stuffs.

Is there a Pinoy version of punk? Show us the *tuong grasa*.



THE WORK FORCE. Green ribbed knit top



GET DRESSY. Red glittery V-neck top and gold glittery skirt

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Knit wit

BY CAMILLE T. CRUZ
PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY JAMES REYES

SOME of the best outfits I've ever seen were a knit top and straight-legged pants, not too wide and definitely not tapered at the ankles. I've wanted to own one of those outfits since I saw them neatly hung on a rack.

I was shopping in this mini department store called Louis, Boston, which is located on Newbury Street, between Boylston and Clarendon



FOR THE ADVENTUROUS. Orange semi-flared pants

Streets. I've visited the place quite often to look at the merchandise I could not really afford. I have never seen such many pieces of clothing I really, really wanted: from knit tops with ribbed fabric to just a plain weave.

I also loved those multi-fabricated reversible jackets, and the basic yet stylish shirts. These were the things I almost loved to death.

Fortunately, knits are not very expensive, depending where they are sold. I found one ribbed, wool knit top in different shades from Lulu Tan-Gan the other week. It's perfectly cut, fit to be worn, although the price was slightly beyond my budget. The colors were great: lime green, burgundy, orange, black. If I could, I would have taken them all.

Knits are not only meant to be worn on top. Tan-Gan carries knit pants, skirts, jackets—good for traveling as well. It's a whole knit world out there if you visit the Tan-Gan store. If your body doesn't feel fit to a knit, don't worry because they have all sizes—from petite to large.

The thing about knits is they can go from casual to dressy. A twinset can be worn with a pair of cargo pants. It's an easy-going look. And then take a halter knit with some glitter or shine to give that extra spark. Pair that top with a skirt of a different color and of the same fabric, and you'll have a dressy outfit. If you want to dress with a knit top at work, pair it off with a simple, straight-cut classic gray or a black pair of pants.

There is so much to see in this knit world. Casual and classic styles of clothing in other simpler fabrics are also available.

Lighter knits are more appropriate in a tropical country like ours. There is a whole variety of knits out there. Just choose whatever suits you best.

This fabric can get hot or itchy, depending on your body's sensitivity. Be sure to try on everything that appeals to you. It's all in the knit.

E-mail the author at camille_cruz@hotmail.com



PASTEL



MURASAKI

The shrinking violet comes out

TO COMPLEMENT the resurgence of yellow gold, especially in jewelry, makeup will be colorful and the lip gloss will be an important element in your kit.

"It's now the lip's turn to look luxurious," says beauty expert Patrick Rosas. The mouths will be tinted in either colorless or candy hues for the makeup shy. Adventurous women will opt for dramatic lacquers.

For eye colors, Rosas favors violet for its rich and yet modern appeal. It flatters the Filipina complexion. It has a way of balancing light skin tones and it suits dark skin. Whether you mix violet with blue, green or yellow eyeshadow, or wear it alone, it will comple-

ment the brownish-black eyes of the Filipina. Match it with pink cheeks and clear lip gloss.

Rosas doesn't believe in a separate day and night look. Good makeup can take the woman anywhere, from dawn to dusk.

He suggests two looks: **Murasaki** (violet in Japanese). Violet shadow is given a smoky finish. Eyes are given a new dimension for day or night.

Pastel. Eyes are intensified by the combination of soft colors. Finish with loads of mascara.

The look is so chic; you won't be a shrinking violet.

For the hair, Rosas believes in a precision cut that suits the individual's facial shape. "Short and unruly is chic, and for the longer tresses, hair that has been set is sexy. Structured ponytail is elegant," he says.



PATRICK Rosas and Jaime Ruben with dancer Anna Villadolid

PHOTO BY MIKE ALQUINTO

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Drink moderately



GO for gold, says Shirley Kuan to Olive Isidro.



CATCH of the day with gold net top from Carmina and Raffy del Rosario



GOLD tunes for Tina Tinio and Lex Ledesma



SIBLING revelry from Celine and Melissa Lopez



GOLDFINGER. Liaa Favis, Muriel Deeney and Belinda Pano



BOLD-PRINTED stars Cathy Webb and Freida Dario

Celebrating a 'gold-fashioned' season

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

GOLD, bold, '80s glam—or bourgeois chic..." said the round gold invite as attire request reminiscent of the British Vogue December 2000 issue.

Beluga Bar on Reposo Street, Makati was be-decked with golden circles and trimmings, as if to invite prosperity for 2001. Well, it is not a sin to dream, is it?

And dream we did, as the Charlie's Gals meet Josie's Pussycats in the Playboy mansion's theme party celebrated the comeback of opulence and decadence in the party scene. Besides, gold is the season's hottest color.

As the title suggested, the party venue had Playboy bunnies hopping around while Josie and her Pussycats purred.

What was this celebration for? one may ask in this time of uncertainty. This event marked hot-hot Beluga Bar's entry into the chi-chi late-night affairs of the city, spearheaded by Angela Trillo (that pretty Trillo scion) and Sari-Sari's 15th year in style setting in the fickle fashion retail trade.

Rajo Laurel designed a lusty, head-to-foot leopard printed ensemble with gold chains for that Versace-meets-Puff-Daddy look, while Henri Calayag bronzed my hair gold for the night.

Hot interior designer Miguel Rosales spruced up Beluga's spacious halls with gold dust, ceiling décor, candles and foil to give it that sparkle that only he can provide. In-house designer Junie Unson made sure there would be no shortage of golden girls that would give James Bond a run for his testosterones.

To set the Playboy mansion vibe into the air, dashing DJ Jed Dario dazzled everyone with his stellar set of magical music. This was heightened by international DJ Nicky Jurado's pumping house tunes that made sure no hips would be left warming the seats.

A chill-out room was set up with Sari-Sari couches on which VIPs lounged around, sipping Y2M Reserve Brut champagne, courtesy of ab-fab (that's absolutely fabulous to you and me) Tita Trillo, Beluga's boss.

The sparkle in the champagne complemented the brilliance of the celebrators. The Ocampos—Mami and Mar G, Aleth Mapa, Anna Sarmiento (who was also celebrating her natal day that night) and Reimon Gutierrez, among the founders of the Sari-Sari chain of stores, were all present. Support came from friends Jun Jun Cuazon, media mavens Harriet Ann Dy (soon to march the merry aisles this May), Tara Santos, Philip and Trish Cu-unieng, Pepper Teehankee, top designer Vic Barba et al, who made sure that party spirits were always up.

Their marketing division's main man, GP Reyes, was busy going around, thanking the guests who arrived early, and "in theme" at that. The effervescent Ben Chan, who arrived with Miguel Pastor, delighted everyone with their presence, so did the scintillatingly charming Mons Romulo-Tantoco, who was with husband Sander. Bench image model Borja Manotoc followed with his IS friends, and Tessa Prieto-Valdes, Leica Carpo and posse posed to the requests of the many photographers around.

Past midnight, awards were given



GOLDENEYE. Monique Guevarra pouts her way to stardom.



GOLD FIND. Monica Olbes by the bar



GOLDEN GALS. Angelique Villaraza and Millet Arzaga



GLAMAZONS Miko Valenzuela, Angelo Villanueva and Ed Aniel



GOLD MAFIA. Junnie Unson and Miguel Rosales



MEN IN GOLD. Cousins Carlo and Eman Pineda



PSYCHEDELICA goes Christian Vasquez and Joll Dingcong



IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY. Paolo Prieto and Joey Carpo



GOLD rush for Jonjon Rufino



FIT FOR A KING. Anton San Diego tries on the author's Rajo Laurel leopard print jacket



OH, BEHAVE! Patrick Reino reigns.



GOLDEN boy Chut Cuerva



GOLDEN GREEK. Rodney Consunji with hot new model Nafsika



PUNK power from DAACS' Mimi and Juliet Tan



"G" IS FOR GOLD! JM Lagdameo and Giselle Toengi with Joyce Jimenez



GLAM mix of good friends Joey Mead and Ed Feist



SARI-SARI. Charlie's angel with Playboy bunny and Josie minus her pussycat



GOLD pleats on Liza Ilarde-Cuenca's skirt



THAT'S MY BOY! Joey Espino's gold-plated necktie is a surefire winner.

Gold undergoes a style resurgence in the third millennium

to the night's most stylish, with the top plum (two winners of P15,000 worth of Sari-Sari shopping spree each, Subic overnight stays, Beluga dinners and champagne, among others) given to the shimmering outfit of stunning actress Giselle Toengi by Mimi and Juliet Tan of DAACS, talent manager Jon Dingcong's psychedelic look, Tessa Prieto-Valdes' golden Farrah Fawcett impression and Melissa Lopez's glam diva interpretation.

WHAT THE PLANETS SAY

Retail scene will pick up, fashion will be more of the same

BY RESTI H. SANTIAGO

IN FASHION, the trends are predictable—sexy clothes, shades of red and black, widgets as accessories, animal skin and vintage treasures. Business will slowly pick up. Books for children and spiritual literature will be hot, so are exotic specialty restaurants (notice the rise of Indian restaurants).

The first quarter of 2001 will be a period of transition and the cosmic dance between the old and the new will be reflected in the retail and fashion scenes. The general trends are revealed by the positions of the planets of commerce and fashion on the recent Winter Solstice, which

will have an effect on us till March 20 on the Spring Equinox.

Retail

The process of recovering from the setbacks of 2001 will be a bit slow. It's only at the end of January that Jupiter and Saturn, the planets associated with commerce, will turn beneficial. (Jupiter is the planet of luck and expansion while Saturn is the planet that brings stability.)

Long-delayed projects may push through after Jan. 25. However, the "confusing energy" of Mercury retrograde will be in effect (Feb. 4-26). Businessmen are advised to be conservative as the possibility of making expensive mistakes is very prominent in the charts. Urgency must be balanced with practicality and cau-

tiousness.

During this retrograde period, shoppers are advised to be very meticulous because there can be an abundance of fake, low-quality or damaged merchandise. Opening of business and making major purchases and decisions should not be timed for February.

For restaurants, variety will be the name of the game. Jupiter traversing in Gemini, the sign of the twins, will make people's mind more inquisitive and taste buds hungry for a new tang. Foreign dishes will be more in demand—the more exotic, the better. Gemini is an action-oriented sign, so food that can be eaten in a snap will be favored over complicated ones.

Shops are advised to meet the growing demand for mental stimulation. Consumers would want more pro-

duct and store information. Be ready with handouts, leaflets and catalogs.

Bookshops will be very lucky this year. The hot items are self-help and New Age books and youth-oriented literature. There will be more magazines and other reading materials, as the publishing industry will benefit from Jupiter's expansive influence. There may be a less software games, car and travel accessories in the marketplace, so shop owners should stock up on these.

Fashion

Prominent in the Winter Solstice equinox was a payoff between Moon (symbol of emotions) in Scorpio (sex and mystery) and Venus (beauty) in Aquarius (unconventionality).

Scorpio is the sign of sensuality. This influence will further emphasize

body-conscious fashions. Women will be more daring in showing off their curves, but they will want to retain the aura of mystery. For this purpose, smooth and velvety materials will be in popular. Black and the dark shades of red will be the favorite colors, especially among the adults. As Scorpio is also associated with raw energy, animal skin will still be in demand. Unusual and futuristic designs will be popular, especially among the youth.

Aquarius is the symbol of future. With its influence, there will be more gadgets and high-tech accessories. The youth will radiate an aura of independence and intelligence in their manner of dressing. MP3 players, mobile phones and accessories that match, if not becoming a part of their clothes, may just do the trick for them. They

will prefer extremely vivid colors, though it may be mixed with the dark colors of Scorpio.

Despite these two contrasting tendencies, those who simply want to feel good without making any fashion statement will prefer gold, lavender and yellow. The most comfortable dresses will be those that exude confidence and regality, echoing the sophisticated taste of Leo.

The first quarter will be slow for the fashion industry. Boutiques must use the period to reinvent themselves. As Mercury turns retrograde on February, a touch of the old will be surfacing again.

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Confused woman is searching for a soul mate

DEAR readers,

Best wishes and thank you for all your greetings, gifts and prayers. Yes, let us all count our blessings and offer each day to the Lord. As a starter, let me quote what a thoughtful brewsbongs@yahoo.com would like to pass on to you:

"If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the millions who will not survive this week."

"If you have never experienced the danger of crime, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 500 million people in this world."

LIVE AND LET LIVE



Tita Dulce

"If you can attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death, you are luckier than three billion people in this world."

"If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75 percent of this world."

"If you have money in the bank, in your wallet and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8 percent of the world's wealthy."

"If your parents are still alive and still married, you are very rare."

"If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly thankful, you are blessed because the majority can, but most do not."

"If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you and furthermore, you are luckier than over two billion people in this world that cannot read at all."

"Have a good day, and pass this along to remind everyone else how blessed we all are."

Thank you, *hijo*. God bless you.

I'm not really a writer but I feel I have to do this. May you find it in your heart to publish this in your column, my comments on Dino's letter titled "A young man finds it hard to mend a broken heart" (PDI Lifestyle, 11/24/00).

Dino, I hope you read this. I feel sorry for what happened. On the other hand, I would like to congratulate you. You are still lucky since you never had yourself committed to that girl. Tita Dulce was right that there are still many fishes in the ocean waiting for a good catcher. Don't waste your precious time on that lady. You don't deserve her; she's nothing but a "pretty gambler." She's not the right one for you. You said you are 30 years old and that you are the breadwinner in the family. No wonder you are still a bachelor. You are doing the right thing by helping your parents and siblings.

Dino, a person like you is seldom found in this busy world. You are one of a kind. Life must go on, just hang on. God has wonderful plans for each and everyone of us. Everything we do and what happen to us are predestined. But we learn from them and the lessons make us stronger so that the next time we get into a battle, we know where and how to stand. Go on and fight. Be convinced that you can make it no matter what trials may come, because at times, God places the darkness so we will also remember that He is the light.

Hope we can find time to discuss things with each other.

MISTY

Thank you for your comments. You did not state your full name and address and so even if Dino would like to get in touch with you to thank you, it will not be possible for now.

Another writer who signed as Frustratedly Confused also wrote to congratulate Dino, but on her three-page letter, she related her personal problems asking for advice. My answer will be on a future column.

I met my soul mate last May. Common things happened to us in the past that's why I believe it is not a coincidence that we were introduced to each other by a friend. Now I am confused. During our second meeting, he was so sweet to me. This meeting was the same, but he acted like we were on.

The point is, when we are not together, he does not show any sign that he cares. I have to make the first move in texting or calling him on the phone. He is good-looking so I know other girls are attracted to him. One more thing, I was born yesterday and he was born today. What do you think, does he have a feeling for me or he just wants me to stay in his life? What am I to him? That's the problem I'm facing now.

Please help me before things get worse. I suffer sleepless nights, worry about the emptiness. I can't understand why he is sweet to me. He has never had a girlfriend in his life, and I'm not wishing to be. I just want to know who am I in his life.

SOUL MATE OF QUEZON CITY

My dear, it could be that he just looks at you as a friend. If he has told you he has never had a girlfriend, then maybe he is just keeping busy and concentrating on what he has to do in his job. Just face the truth. He is a friend, yes, but he has never expressed his love for you. The fact that you are the one texting and calling him up, he surely realizes you care for him. As I have stated in previous answers to those with similar problems, the better thing is to have a man chase you until you can catch him. Right now you are the one reaching out to him. Why not keep a safe distance and give him a chance to miss you instead? And if you keep your silence and he does not get in touch with you, accept the truth.

By the way, I do not know about being soul mates. Why not write to Mr. Jaime Licaucó?

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, China Rocas Avenue corner Yague and Mas-



ANGELITA Pacey, David Pacey, Albert and Papal awardee Nenita Balane



ALBERT at one of his birthday celebrations with (from left) Ofelia Trinidad, Viring Ongkeko and Zeny Cabral



ALBERT hobnobbing with Lynn Sunico, Helen Ong and Letty Syquia.

Farewell to the Pied Piper of hobnobbing

BY DONNIE C. RAMIREZ

I WAS having dinner with friends at a Chinese restaurant on Pasay Road when I got an urgent text message. "Come right away, Albert and Danney have been waiting!" That was Nov. 29. And I almost forgot that I was supposed to be with them at Tempura Misono.

The sender was Chit Lijauco, lifestyle editor of the Manila Times. Danney is Danney League, a Filipino ship purser whom I and a group of Philippine journalists met and befriended in a Northwest Airlines-Royal Caribbean Cruise fam tour. And Albert? He was Albert Seeland, of course, restaurant manager of Tempura Misono at the Hyatt Regency Manila.

Early morning of Dec. 25, only a little over a month after that text from Chit, I got another message—this time more tragic than hurried—from Bulletin lifestyle editor Ethel Timbol. In between sobs, Ethel told me that Albert died Christmas eve of an apparent heart attack.

Last time

The last time I saw Albert alive was at the birthday dinner of Mare lady Gilda Salonga in Greenhills on Dec. 4. Wearing one of his trademark handpainted barongs and clutching his ubiquitous camera under his arms, Albert looked in the pink of health.

"Hoy, drop by Tempura Misono naman after the holidays so we can have our usual *chikahan*," he told me.

Looking back at that evening, I couldn't help but feel a little betrayed by Albert. Really, pal, why didn't you even give the slightest hint that you were saying goodbye? How could you, my friend!

With his untimely demise, Albert left a void in the exciting world of hobnobbing. His high-profile job as restaurant manager and society columnist exposed him to powerful people. It allowed him to be privy with the many titillating intrigues and illicit encounters. While he delighted in them, he rarely spoke about them, always observing utmost discretion and, sometimes, coquettish childishness that never failed to charm his listeners.

Albert Oblepias Seeland was born Aug. 13, 1948, the only son of a Norwegian father and Filipino mother. His employment record at the Hyatt lists St. Paul's College (for primary grade), Malate Catholic Church (for high school) and Feati University (for college) as the schools he attended. His 32 years with the hotel started with the lowly job as kitchen helper, then busboy and waiter. When he eventually got elevated to the position of restaurant manager of Tempura Misono, Albert embraced the job with passion and dedication, elevating the concept of the



JUANCHO A. Baltazar



WILMA Estaura



SERGE Dassy during the wake



ALBERT (third from left) as Hyatt Manager of the Year (1995) with Jose Mari Chan, former GM Marc Dardenne and Lisa Chan



ALBERT'S 15-year-old son Jordan (extreme left) at the wake

post to a virtual art form. He treated guests not only as royalty but as friends—welcoming them with his infectious smile and entertaining them with lively chatter. He was the essential *maitre d'*.

Power venue

Under Albert's stewardship, Tempura Misono evolved into a "power lunch venue" whose clientele included major movers and shakers of government, business and society. With them, Albert became not just a *maitre d'* or a restaurant manager; he became their confidante and sounding board for gripes and disappointments, broken relationships and even lost fortunes. Albert was always a willing and sympathetic listener to whom they could vent out their despair, ire and frustrations.

At his two-night wake at the Santuario de San Antonio, the Hyatt management showed their undying gratitude to Albert. They footed the expenses incurred in the hospital where his 15-year-old son Jordan and his nephews rushed him on Christmas eve, as well as the cost of his interment at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque. But more than the purely material assistance was the moral support shown by the Hyatt executives and staff led by owner Jose Mari Chan and general manager David Pacey. Their presence was visible all through the wake and until Albert's burial on Dec. 28.

Beneath his jolly and carefree exterior, Albert was a deeply religious man. He was a devotee of Our Lady of Manaoag. At the time of his death, he was the president of the Mini-Pastoral Council of the Immaculada Concepcion Parish in the Las Piñas Parish where he resided. Every Saturday, he oversaw the floral decoration of the altar in their little chapel. He was also a founding member of the Hyatt Employees Group, which treats children from depressed communities of Pasay and Bacalaran to an annual Christmas party. Alas, last year's party wasn't happy because Albert had gone.

For sure, Tempura Misono will run its full course. The *manghuhulas* (a bonus that Albert successfully initiated and championed) will most likely continue to provide entertainment to its customers. And certainly, too, Manila's social life will continue to merrily roll along. But without the Pied Piper as immortalized by Albert Seeland, the artful realm of hobnobbing had lost a shining star.

I will miss Albert Seeland, a cherished friend with whom I shared many wonderful moments of candid, yet always kindred, tête-à-tête. At the same time, I am happy for him because I know that he is finally hobnobbing not with weak and vulnerable mortals, but with angels whose innocence is matched by his good heart. Rest peacefully, my friend!



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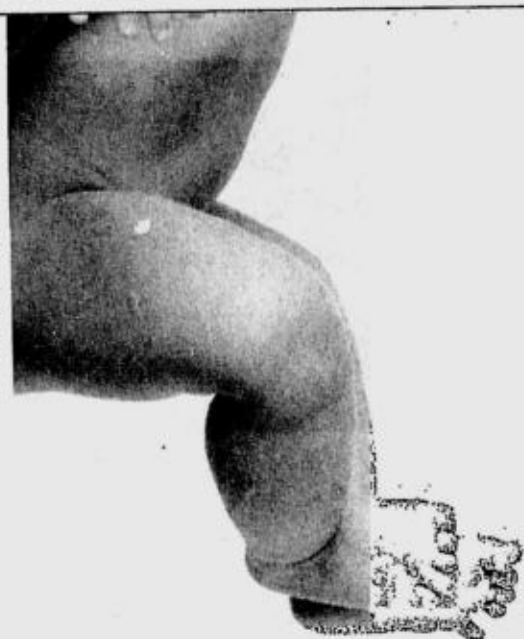
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Sara Lee

ISAAC shows his sensitive side by photographing the limbs of Bea Lucero-Lhuillier's son.



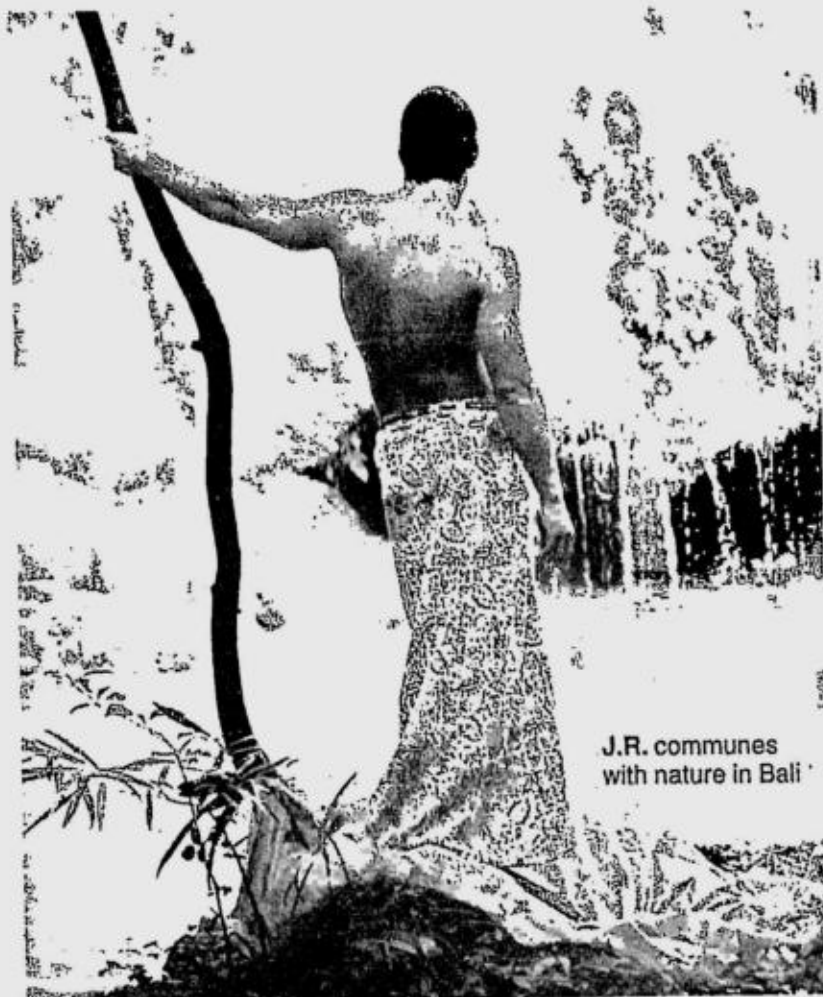
SPANISH model David flew in all the way to Manila to have his portrait taken by Isaac.

Hold that provocative pose

PHOTOGRAPHER Raymund Isaac's images can be subtle, poetic, emotional and contemplative. His sensitivity is a powerful gift. He makes his subjects very comfortable with him, whether they're dressed or undressed. Isaac has that creative and childlike quality that's full of life and crazy with joy. Conscientious, he loses himself in this work. No wonder, any sitter is always happy with the results. For this layout, Isaac goes antifashion and celebrates the human form.

His works are on view at Batavia restaurant, 1818 Maria Orosa street, Malate, Manila.

RAYMUND'S brother, J.R. Isaac, wears a sarong by Patis Tesoro. The look was inspired by a Balinese wedding.



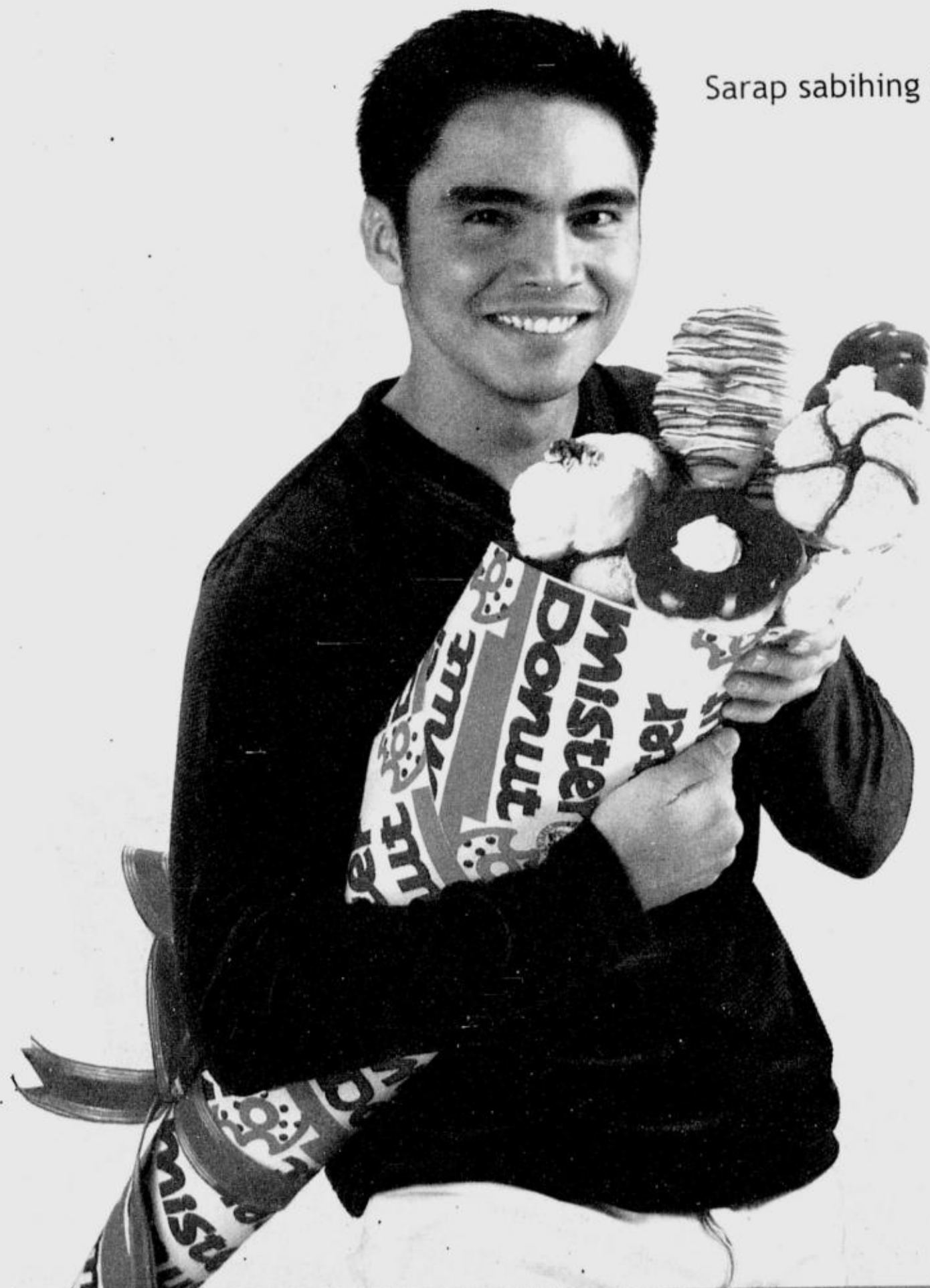
J.R. communes with nature in Bali.

DAVID'S wife, Mimi, shows off her dancing form.



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Italian sale tomorrow

LINEA Italia Group (LIG) brings prices to new, lows when "The Great Italian Sale" returns starting tomorrow. "The Great Italian Sale" is on at all LIG shops: Linea Italia 6750, Linea Italia (SM Manila, Ayala Center Cebu, SM Megamall, Alabang Town Center), Versace Jeans Couture (Greenbelt Mall), Prima Linea (Greenbelt, SM Megamall, Ayala Center Cebu), Viva (SM Megamall, SM Cebu), Linea Uomo (Alabang Town Center, Park Square I, SM Cebu, SM Megamall), Uomo Tu (Greenbelt Mall, Ayala Center Cebu), Capolinea (Greenbelt Mall, SM Cebu). Also participating are members of the Marconi Fashion Group (Morse corner Marconi Street, Makati City; Robinsons Galleria, SM North Edsa, SM Fairview, Festival Mall Alabang) and Corso Marconi Cebu. In addition to the 30-percent discount, some collections at Corso Marconi shops are available from P50-995. Sale is on until supplies last.

SHOPPING REWARD. The Ayala Malls invite everyone to get their Discount Card Plus which enables cardholders to enjoy discounts and free gifts in over 700 stores across Ayala's three major malls: Ayala Center Makati, Alabang Town Center and the Ayala Center Cebu. As a privilege card, the Discount Plus Card assures cardholders of complimentary parking passes, complimentary visits to the customer lounge, free use of telephone at the Discount Plus Booth and reserved seats in Ayala mall events. To get your card, fill out an application form and pay only P500. The card will be valid for three years.

CATERING SEMINAR. ProActive Center for Training is holding a seminar-workshop on restaurant management on Jan. 8-16, 1-5 p.m., at The Centerpoint Chef, 3/F Centerpoint Condominium, Julia Vargas Avenue corner Garnet Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 823-4947.

ART CONTEST. In celebration of the Philippines-Japan Festival 2001, the Embassy of Japan, GSIS Museum and Philippine Association of Japanese Ministry of Education Scholars present the Philippines-Japan Children's Art Contest. This nationwide contest aims to promote greater understanding between the Philippines and Japan through children's art. Deadline of submission of entries is on Jan. 12. All 120 works will be exhibited Jan. 25 to March 15 at the GSIS Museum. Entry forms are available at the GSIS Museum, GSIS Financial Center, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. Call 551-1301.

ILLUSTRATORS PRIZE. The Philippine Board on Books for Young People is inviting all illustrators to join the 2001 PBBY Illustrator's Prize. All entries must be original and based on the PBBY-Salanga Writer's Prize winner, "Bakit Matagal ang Sundo Ko?" by Frances Kristine V. Canon. Call 372-3548 to 49 or e-mail research@adarna.com.ph.

MARRIAGE SEMINAR. Retrouvaille Philippines, a Catholic ministry, will hold its first weekend seminar for the year 2001 on Jan. 12-14 at the Merciful Sisters Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Tagaytay City. The seminar is open to all married couples. Weekend seminars are scheduled every other month starting this January. Call 523-3361, 525-0308, 931-8413, 932-3750 and 933-2783.

GARDEN EXPO. The Trade Show Specialist Inc. is sponsoring a Christmas Garden Expo until Jan. 7 at the Big R parking lot, Robinsons, Novaliches, QC. Call 746-3525 or 748-0281.

SPECIAL SESSION. The Age of Aquarius Center offers private sessions with Aquarian Sibyl and Aquarian Star Seer. Discover what's in store for you in 2001 in a two-hour comprehensive session. Call 924-1868 or 723-6016.



CHRISTMAS FUND DRIVE

The Salvation Army (TSA) recently launched the Red Shield Appeal, an annual fund drive for less fortunate Filipinos. This year's fund drive aims to raise P2 million to benefit the various social services of the TSA, namely the rebuilding of its center for homeless children in Tanay, and for the support of sexually abused children. TSA is a registered charity of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Shown are Capt. Kaye Seccombe and Major Abraham Mapangal of the TSA Public Relations Department. Call 524-0086 to -88.

LIFESTYLE



Try Pinoy Zen for 2001

IF lifestyle were normal, this column should be forecasting trends this time of year, like what every dutiful Lifestyle section does, but it's not.

Instead, with Christmas over and done with, the first work day this week saw our bodies reporting for work, but our minds present at The Trial. The TV and radio were on in the offices and after office hours, the car radio took over the job in the commute home. We hardly had mental space for anything else, least of all fashion trends, no matter that Vogue, Elle and In Style overflow with gold, red and glitz—the look of year 2001.

Now more than ever, these fashion sheets are an alien planet divorced from ours; our exchange rate sees to that.

Our magazine's CD Master maker Dino N. captured the Pinoy psyche/lifestyle last Tuesday when I called him just as Clarissa Ocampo had mentioned Estelito Mendoza in her testimony. Supposed to be discussing business on the phone, he said instead, "Did you hear that?" So he was watching The Trial, I asked. He replied, "Of course, that's more important than anything else now." What he meant was that business could wait.

LIFE-STYLED



Thelma Sioson
San Juan

Indeed business remains in a wait-and-see mode, as life in general seems on hold. Earlier that day, our Finance guy updated me on the peso that had again broken the P50 barrier—his n-th time reminder really that it's our "sheer survival scenario" that should be now in place, not the growth scenario. (These are the days when you realize a writer's stress from scooping fashion trends is nirvana compared to a manager's stress about bottomline. But stress is my middle name.)

Business is trying to survive while over the weekend, innocent lives perished. Every day it's media's goal to lend a human face to the news. That weekend, media got more than that—the news wore literally torn faces and mangled bodies, a few of these belonging to children. The country will never be the same after that New Year. It should not be the same. The "shadow goons" who bombed the people crossed the line—mocking institutions and values system is one thing, but slaughtering Filipinos in their most revered season is another; it brings us to a point of no return.

On the surface it instills in the Filipino a sense of fear, a sense of danger, so that many now make the sign of the Cross as they ride the LRT or enter the mall. But beneath the surface, it must reinforce in the Filipino a sense of national purpose as to why systems and people must be changed. If the bombers thought they had sown confusion, think again. It produced not only a clarity of purpose but also fortitude. (Just note the frequency of "conviction ads" in the dailies where people declare their stand.) The Pinoy is not dumb; he can tell the heroes from the villains in their midst. And apparently, there are many Clarissa Ocampos out there.

And from such clarity can only come peace of mind. So you want to talk trends? Like it or not, our lifestyle is turning political this year. The crisis in general—the foreign exchange rate in particular—is impacting on what we can or can't do, what we can buy or can't buy, what we can enjoy or can't enjoy. But more than work or leisure issues, it's flushing out of us convictions we thought were no longer there, and values we feared had died.

Spirituality

I've written it in my magazine's editor's note but I'll say it again because it's becoming more evident. Peace of mind will be the most saleable trend/merchandise this year again. Because of what he's being made to go through, the Pinoy will pursue peace of mind, buy it if he must—the clarity and balance that is Zen. Superficially, it's found in the goods out on the market (not to mention Zen interiors [See related story on page D2]); profoundly or spiritually, in the range of well-being activities and meditation workshops.

You realize how many candles—of every imaginable scent, flavor, design—you gave away and got this Christmas? (Candle knocked off the picture frame from the most generic gift category.) Candles, incense (again, in every scent), Zen table fountains and gardens, power beads, crystals, stones are a carryover from the New Age drift of the '90s. They combine with the organic and natural (e.g. soap, makeup), with the exotic (e.g. Orientalia, African, Middle Eastern). They're a foil to the techno, which we have yet to have our fill of.

While this is already old hat in the US, Europe and other style capitals, this drift is peaking anew here if only because we long for some quiet and stability—we're running for cover in this crisis. We'll grab anti-stress gadgets and activities that will help us decompress.

Well-being

Since we can't find it in our messy environment, we're looking for our center—in ourselves, which should make all the centering and spiritual workshops more popular. Just see the interesting lineup of topics in such centers as

TRY/p.D2

Peace of mind will be the most saleable trend this year—buy it if we must

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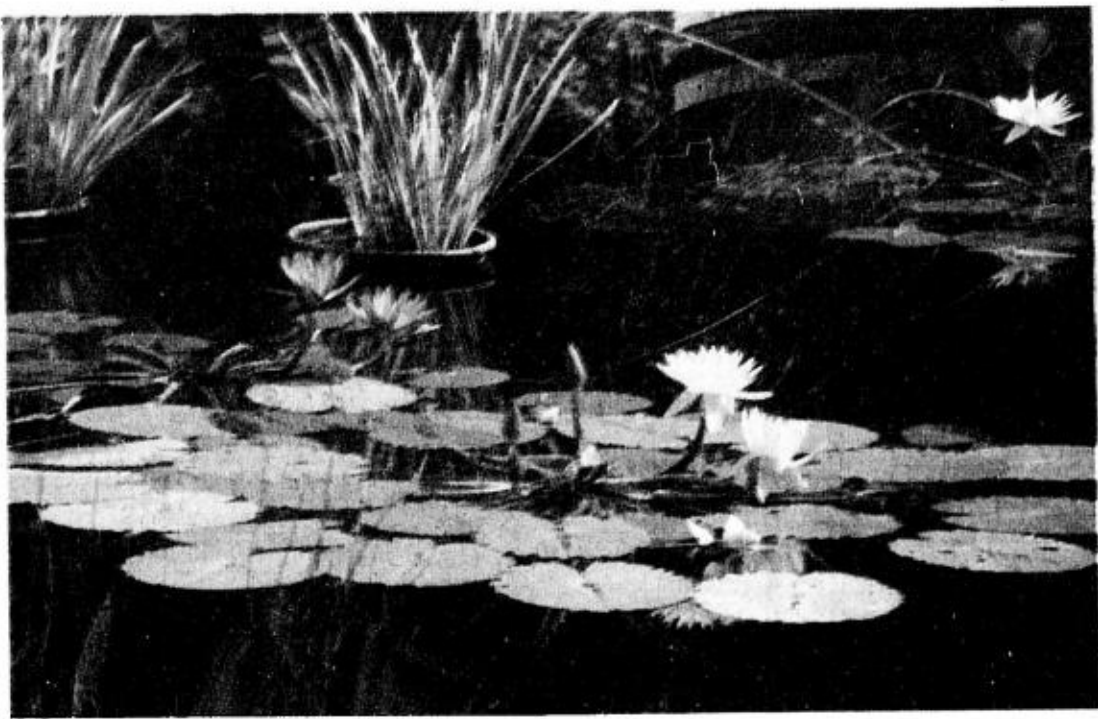
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THINK of the pond as the eye of the garden, gathering the changing sky in its gaze.

Style of tranquility

Living with Zen
By Ou Baholyodhis
208 pages

BY TITA GIRON

IT is the perfect book for anyone in search of an antidote or alternative way of life to cope with today's stressful and maddening existence. Don't worry, there are no mantras to chant. And, there is no requirement in embracing Zen philosophy to appreciate the book and benefit from it.

Essentially, "Living with Zen" inspires and makes us aware of the reasons we cannot cope with the thousand-and-one aggravations in these times. As author Ou Baholyodhis points out, "We live in a realm of disturbances that impair our visions and our perception. Too many things talk to us at the same time."

Zen, as a way of life, advocates simplicity, purity and naturalness. "By paring things down to their essentials, we arrive at a

clarity which enables us to cope," the author explains.

We recommend this book, particularly to our fellow workers who need to transform their homes and work area into a sanctuary from which to derive peace and contentment. This book has several sections that provide Zen-inspired ideas for the home and garden.

As the publisher described it, the book "shows how to harness the calming power of Zen—and turn your home into an oasis of tranquility."

Each chapter features generous information, tips and vignettes of inspiration. As a bonus, 190 beautiful photographs provide imaginative ideas on how to decorate the home, prepare and present food, and landscape the garden.

Here's a sample of an inspiring tip: "The Zen garden is quintessentially a place for meditation. Find a tranquil site and sit comfortably with your hands loosely clasped—use a soft cushion if you like. Take long, slow, deep breaths, concentrating all your attention on the in-breath and out-breath, until you feel relaxed. Then begin



to let the sights and sounds of the garden drift through your consciousness. Do not cling to any thoughts or perceptions; just let them float in and out of awareness like blossom on a light spring breeze."

He writes about the bamboo: "The bamboo's straight stem striving toward the heavens symbolizes the purposefulness of meditation; while the hollowness within suggests the unburdened spirit... A clump makes a fine wind-



BLOSSOMS to ponder



ZIGZAG stepping stones make walking over water an experience.

break, and will send out relaxing rustling sounds as it sways in the breeze—for some Taoist masters, the rustle of bamboo was the symbol of enlightenment."

The author is a design consultant in London where he has his studio, Function. He studied furniture and product design and is known for specializing in style that reflects tranquility and vitality. Baholyodhis has had exhibits of his works and has given talks and lectures all over the world.

Available at National Bookstore

THE SPIRIT OF ZEN:
Simplicity, purity and naturalness

Try Pinoy Zen for 2001

(From page D1)

Chakra and you'll know. (Speaking of centering and visioning, how you wished you had advised Ms. Ocampo, before she went on the witness stand, on how to fix her gaze on a calming firm spot, while she was being burned at the stake, instead of being made to look at a coiffured witch.)

Well-being treatments will not be limited to spas or fitness centers. For instance, the Emphasis hair salon of Teng Roma and Marge Olives is introducing the Balinese massage to its clientele in a soothing lifestyle setting (complete with a café) that's modern and Oriental.

However, given the Pinoy character, peace of mind should be anything but boring. He'll give this exercise his trademark irreverence and gallows humor. It'll be Zen married to black comedy, zarzuela and vaudeville. As you light that aromatic candle, you'll turn on that "White Album" CD (if you haven't heard the "White Album," you're light years behind). Pinoy Zen.

But while we'll be buying peace of mind, the Pinoy already has something he need not buy. Common sense. Now the Defense keeps on forgetting that.

Sundries

New beginnings. The New Year is sweet and rosy for some—the young couples I know who've just tied the knot or are about to. Mario Katigbak's only girl Anya is now Mrs. Andrew Cajucom, her colleague at BPI. Mario, who when Anya was a subteener, vowed to us that he'd have a convent built for his only daughter, was amazingly a picture of cool that evening at Santuario de San Antonio and later at Manila Polo Club. It must have been because he had already seen to the last detail of a most elegant wedding. In contrast, Anya was a crying bride—every step of the way—tears of joy, gratitude, romance. She cried buckets before

she could say her dad's name as she thanked him. You would, too—the love and good taste showed in every detail. The Polo Club hall was in simple minimalist white, with only pastel blooms arranged in white square boxes as table centerpieces. That was the first time I saw the floral arrangements of 1816's Robert Blancaflor and Clive de los Santos—these guys are good... Over the weekend, Studio 23 marketing director Rica Alfonso and music apostle Toti Dalmacion got married at Malate Church. This young couple makes for a formidable combination... Right in my own backyard, people are getting engaged. Metro fashion editor and INQUIRER contributor Harriet Ann Dy will marry Canada-based Ralph Balila in May, here, but the couple will make Toronto their home... Now this one came in the middle of deadline. One afternoon last week, writer Penny Daza called us in the office to say that she couldn't make the trip back from Subic—because she had just been engaged. Her longtime beau Mike Tuviera proposed marriage in circumstances that could only be described as Hollywoodish. They were horseback-riding in Subic when Mike nudged her to ride on into the forested area. As she rode closer to the trees, she noticed garlands hanging down the branches, and as she stopped on a spot, she looked down on the ground and there it was—written in flowers on the soil: "Will you marry me?" Only a TV production old hand like Mike (whose family produces "Eat Bulaga") could have pulled off such a production. Not surprisingly, Penny's dotting sister Pat-p is as excited as Penny over the July wedding. Pat-p's married to councilor Mike Daza. Now, they kid their mother Jullie Yap Daza—all the girls in the family are attached to a "Mike," so shouldn't their mom find her own "Mike," the two naughty daughters ask. I think the mom must have shot back, "Not Velarde."

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph

Shopping placidly amid the crassness of Manhattan

BY CHERISH GARCIA-HERNANDEZ

NEW York City a week before Christmas is absolute bedlam. Bloomingdale's has shoppers elbow to elbow, FAO Schwartz has a long line of people just waiting to get in, and even at Tiffany and Co., one is hard-pressed to get the attention of a sales person.

Fifth Avenue is swarming with people, mostly tourists making a beeline for the mega Warner Brother's store, the Disney store or the gigantic NBA store. In the midst of it all, beside the shiny Trump Tower, off 55th street, is a sleek, postmodern building that houses the unassuming Japanese department store, Takashimaya.

Takashimaya started as a cotton goods store in Kyoto in 1831. It became a department store in 1919 and today it has stores all over Japan as well as in major cities like New York, Paris, London, Milan, Hong Kong and Singapore. What makes it unique is that around 75 percent of its merchandise is exclusive to Takashimaya.

Entering Takashimaya is like entering another world. Its Zen-like atmosphere almost commands hushed tones. It is a welcome respite from the noise and chaos outside. Upon entering, the whiff of fresh flowers is soothing to say the least. The high-ceilinged lobby houses the flora and fauna of the very upscale New York florist Christian Tortu. Amid a forest of Asian and Western blooms are antique terra-cotta pots.

One-of-a-kind pieces

The second floor houses unique travel gear like luggage and functional clothing. What can one find here? Crushable hats, \$95 trench coats and a "Fear of Flying" aromatherapy kit. In the beginning, the first two floors of the store were used as a gallery, but in 1997, 3,000 sq m were converted into a travel department. What's interesting is the gallery theme was continued as is evidenced by museum-like cases lined with Hunan silk for smaller articles like watches and eyewear. Although Takashimaya can be compared to other upscale department stores like Barneys, it is very different in many aspects.

For one, it is not stocked in the way most department stores are. It has relatively few one-of-a-kind pieces and walking through the store feels more like taking a peek into a private residence filled with beautiful objects.

The remaining three floors, which continue the store's very specific refined aesthetic, are devoted to bed and bath, cosmetics and jewelry. With merchandise sparsely distributed throughout the store and not crammed in, each piece is given the attention it deserves.

Of course, all this minimalist luxury doesn't come cheap. There's a Mitsuko Tarui wool fleece, linen fiber and silk bed thrown on this opulent iron bed that is drop-dead gorgeous. There was no visible price tag but I can imagine it costs an arm and a leg. Other sinful indulgences were a pair of silver salt and peppershakers for \$395, flatware with porcelain handles brushed with real gold for \$350 (set of five) and an amazing cypress Japanese chest for \$38,000.

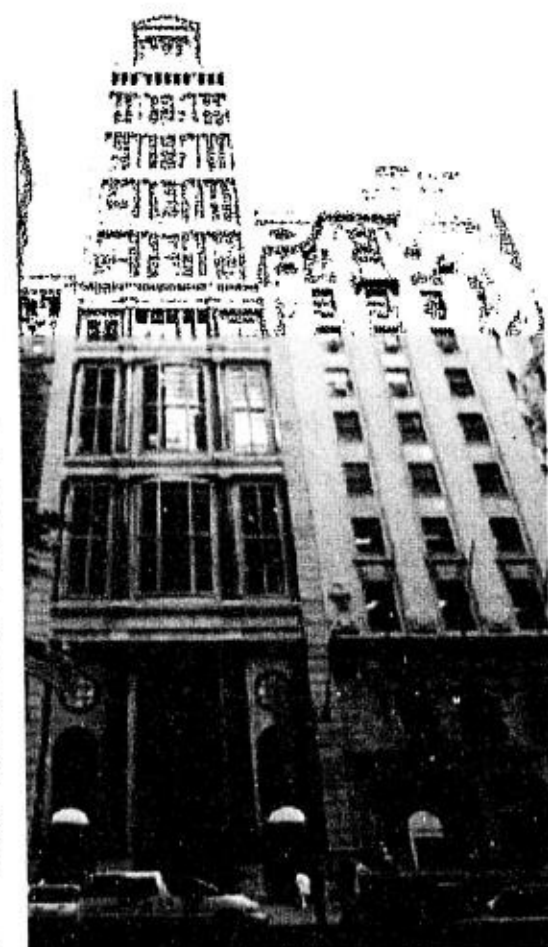
Delicious creations

The jewelry department carries equally unique items like Judo-inspired sterling silver belt buckles with alligator straps by Patricia Ficalora, Delphine Pariente accessories like her Bohemian glass bead necklace and the Wendy Brigode "tin cup" pearl necklace which spawned the floating pearl craze.

After the sensory overload from looking at too many beautiful objects, one can unwind at the Tea Box Café, which is by no means a department store cafeteria. It has delicious creations like Earl Grey Tea ice cream, Green Tea mousse or their signature chocolate covered pear, apple and ginger sampler from chef Ellen Greaves, formerly of the restaurant Quilted Giraffe.

Takashimaya is the place to buy high-end exotic gifts for someone who has everything. The crowd is definitely chi-chi as well. On the elevator going up, we were with this amusing Prada clad man who had his chihuahua with him. We couldn't help but notice the dog was clad in a Gucci dog raincoat with a matching Gucci leash.

But we mere mortals shouldn't despair. There are a few affordable items like assorted candles, hand-blown vases or maybe a bottle of Takashimaya's signature fragrance T. Or maybe you could buy a pair of chopsticks and have them wrapped. The packaging of Takashimaya is excellent and any gift from there will look like it cost hundreds of dollars. Then you can walk out into Fifth Avenue with their ubiquitous three-sided shopping bag and feel like one of their well-heeled patrons.



TAKASHIMAYA

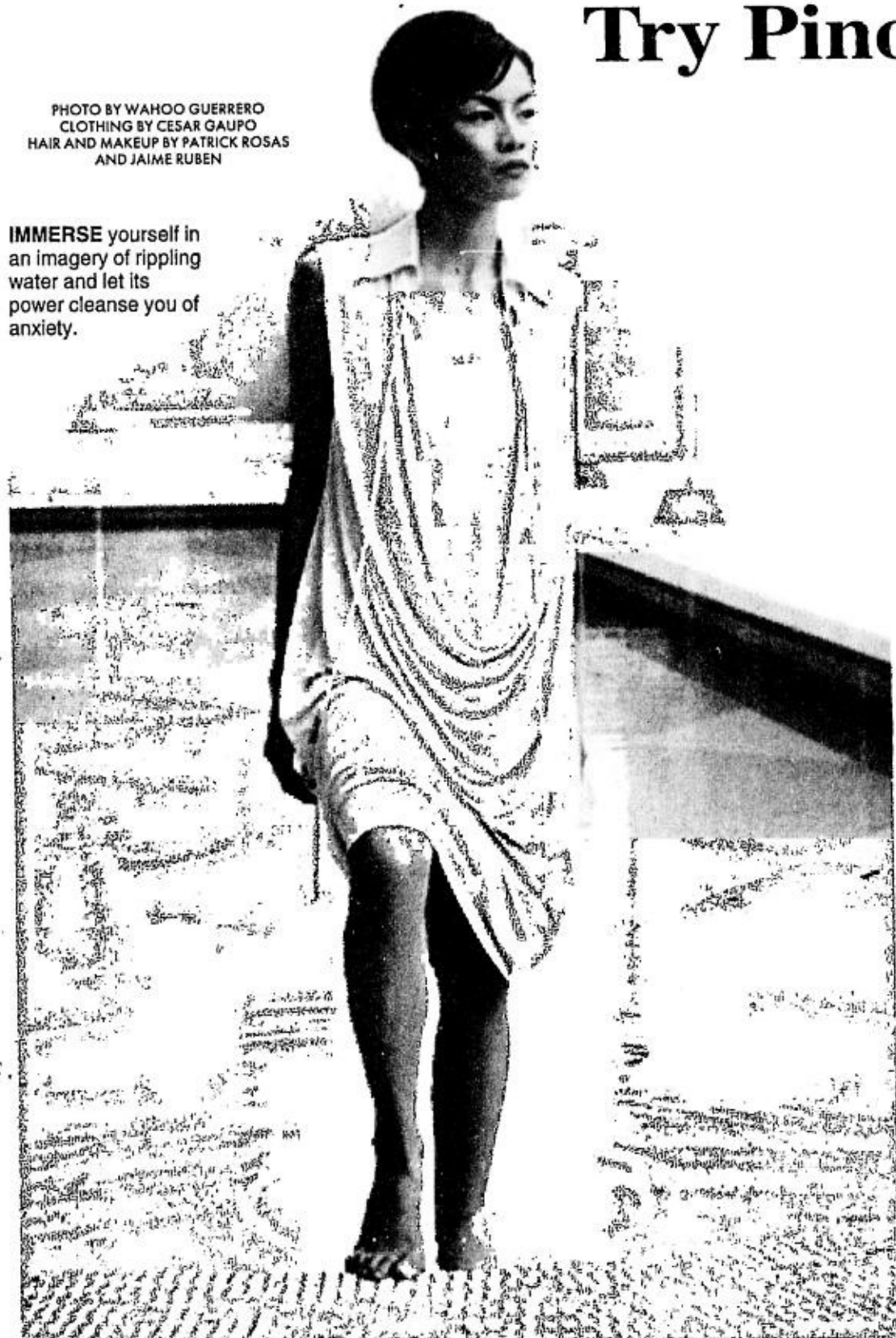


PHOTO BY WAHOO GUERRERO
CLOTHING BY CESAR GAUPO
HAIR AND MAKEUP BY PATRICK ROSAS
AND JAIME RUBEN

IMMERSE yourself in an imagery of rippling water and let its power cleanse you of anxiety.

On dams and a marine sanctuary

THE NEW year should keep us on the watch for two environmental issues. These are issues of landmark proportions acted on the World Conservation Union (or International Union for the Conservation of Nature-IUCN).

One is a motion to make the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea a marine sanctuary to benefit the countries that use it for fishing and other means of livelihood.

The second is the release of report by the World Commission on Dams which offers a new approach to looking at all energy development options, one that addresses the problems of the effects of disasters, either natural or connected with the construction of dams.

Making Spratly a marine sanctuary is a diplomatic solution—and an environmental one—to the long-existing problem of its rightful ownership. For years, several countries, particularly those situated near the island, have laid claim to it, often causing near quarrels. The motion, sponsored by a Philippine NGO, the Ecological Society of the Philippines, was presented at the Second World Conservation Congress held last October in Amman, Jordan. It was later altered to limit decision-making on the proposal to the countries most concerned—the Philippines and China.

The World Commission on Dams' report, commissioned by the IUCN, took 2½ years to finalize. "It is a landmark in the history of the development and operations of dams," said Maritta Koch-Weser, director general of the IUCN. It looks at all energy development options while recognizing people's rights, truthfully assessing all risks involved and the alternative to irrigation, water shortage and hydropower.

The report studies the state of rivers, lakes and wetlands, taking cognizance of the fact that currently, 30 percent of freshwater fish and over 800 other freshwater species are on the brink of extinction due either to natural disasters like floods and drought, or to some connection with dam construction.

The magnitude of impacts of dams on people, river basins and ecosystems may be gleaned from IUCN global estimates: some 40 to 80 million people are displaced by dams while 60 percent of the world's rivers have been affected by them. The nature and magnitude of these impacts on communities and the environment are now established key issues in the dam problem.

Why dams?

The IUCN has focused on dams because most projects involving natural resources for industrial use (like mining) or energy-generation (like dams), inevitably change the natural lay of the land, or, as in dams, the natural flow of rivers and waterways. A dam can cause water to back up, flooding large areas of land and form a reservoir which destroys plants and animal habitats and which, if grown stagnant, could spread disease. All of these can cause the displacement of people leading to sociopolitical problems like those of ancestral land, which are prevalent here.

With the world population growing, the need for hydroelectric power becomes greater, making dam construction more urgent. Building them, however, is not a simple matter of laying spade to

Herbs to be featured in garden show

CULINARY and medicinal herbs will be one of the various products to be displayed at the "Garden Extravaganza, Health, Sports and Home Updates" show at Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan, on Jan. 12 to Feb. 4.

Organized by Archer Exhibit Exponent headed by Rudy Leal, the event will also showcase bonsai, dish gardens, terrariums, orchids and other ornamentals. This one-stop shop event will also feature health and beauty products, sports accessories, handicrafts, appliances, kitchen wares, paintings, antiques, furniture, leather goods, cell phones and other communication gadgets at bargain prices.

Rosemary (*rosmarinus officinales*, below), commonly called locally as *romero*, has many uses—to flavor roast, stewed mutton and lamb, and stuffings for strongly flavored meat and game. Rosemary tea is made out of dried leaves, and relieves stomach ache. A strongly scented plant, rosemary is good as aromatherapy. Its flavor is so robust it can be overpowering and should therefore be used in moderation.



ROSEMARY

Free plant art lectures

FREE lecture-demonstrations on plant arts will be conducted by Serapion S. Metilla on the following dates: Jan. 20, "Bonsai Culture"; Jan. 27, "Corsage and Bridal Bouquet-Making"; and Feb. 3, "Dish-gardening and Terrarium-making." This is in line with the "Garden Extravaganza, Health, Sports and Home Updates" show on Jan. 12 to Feb. 6 at Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan, Metro Manila.

All lectures will start at 3 p.m. Some materials will be raffled off free to the participants. Call 721-1464 or 722-7062.

SEEING GREEN



Doris Gaskell Nuyda



MAKE Spratly a marine sanctuary.

gravel. The concerns of people living in the site must be considered very seriously as well as the effects of construction on the environment.

One has only to remember a similar problem in

Mt. Apo, Mindanao where, to this day, the Lumad (tribal communities) are protesting the "invasion" of the geothermal plant which they say is taking away their mountain and their way of life.

Q&A

#1

Do I still earn points even if the participating establishment where I made a purchase did not give a discount?

Yes. You can earn points in 700 plus participating establishments (except jewelry, home appliances and service shops). For every P100 purchase, you earn one (1) point. Just make sure that you have your card swiped every time you make a purchase.



DISCOUNT PLUS HOTLINE 752-7324 to 25

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Shop in pesos and get a chance to win in dollars* with the Livin' La VISA Lifestyle Raffle! Just charge a minimum of ₱1,000 to your VISA card and you could win the first prize: U.S. \$40,000 in cash credit! There's also a second prize of U.S. \$5,000, a third prize of U.S. \$1,000 and twenty consolation prizes of U.S. \$200 each. It's so easy to join! Just indicate your name, address, telephone number, and signature on the back of the charge slip, put it in a white envelope and drop in drop boxes in selected supermarkets. Or mail your entries to "Livin' La VISA Lifestyle Raffle Promo", c/o Ace Saatchi and Saatchi, 10th flr, Feliza Bldg., 108 Herrera St., Legaspi Village, Makati City, Metro Manila. And if you're a merchant that accepts VISA then you could be a winner too! The merchants of the First to Third prize winners also get dollar prizes! The Livin' La VISA Lifestyle Raffle promo runs from December 15, 2000 to March 15, 2001 only so charge today!



No. 1 in the Philippines. No. 1 in the World.

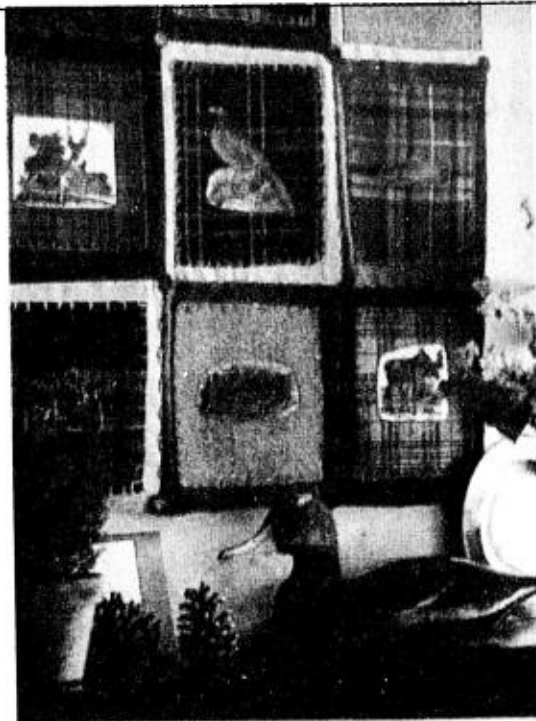
*If the winner has a dollar account with the card issuer.

See statement stuffers and take-one flyers for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1255 series of 2000.



BEAUTIFUL saris backed with striped Indian cotton are draped back on antique stays to provide a sun blind which at night can be let down to provide efficient curtaining.



A RANGE of appliqué techniques and heavy blanket stitch are used to make this lovely pictorial wall-hanging, which prove to be an ideal way of using up fabric scraps and exploring a mixture of textures. The transferred images are hand-colored to create a look of aged engravings.



THIS interesting alcove is given an extra dimension by the addition of simple shelves with tiny pillars. It makes a lovely display area for traditional Mexican paraphernalia, including icons and plastic items. The wall tiles are made from squares of polished aluminum. Together with a new worktop, these make a chic backdrop to modern metals and frosted glass or plastic.



THE MOSAIC tile-effect wall and low seating all add to the look of the den. Inexpensive paper star lanterns are placed over standard and table lamps for a twinkling light effect, while the canvas blind and tented ceiling complete the look.

Demystifying design



THE LARGE white space is punctuated with furniture and accessories in vibrant red, orange and metallic green.

Creating a Look: A Practical Guide to Achieving 12 Looks from Around the World By Liz Wagstaff Quadrille Publishing Limited 157 pages

BY MERCEDES REYES

FILIPINO homes are the architectural equivalent of a scrapbook: a chaotic mix of furniture and accessories collected over the years and thrown into a hopelessly mismatched whole. Unity and balance, form and function are sacrificed for nostalgia ("That moth-eaten Persian rug was a wedding gift!") or misplaced frugality ("If we hang on to that broken



THIS mirror with its ornate molding is perfect in a boudoir. It was gilded with aluminum leaf and softly aged. Long glass vases with single stems are simple yet stunning way to style the room.

stereo for 15 more years, we could sell it as an antique!"). But a cluttered house can be visually exhausting, and a thorough rummage sale and a good design book can create the serenity, joy and warmth that a home should give. "Creating a Look" by Liz Wagstaff is precisely one such book.

Whole menu

Wagstaff, a regular contributor to BBC's "Change That" and "Changing Rooms," draws inspiration from 12 countries from around the world to present a whole menu of possible decorating themes: Long Island's beach house tranquility, China's Oriental elegance, Italy's artistic texture, Morocco's exotic splendor, New York's urban chic, England's Old World sophistication, Scotland's playfulness, Mexico's warmth, Scandinavia's childlike charm, India's sensuality, France's romantic luxury and Greece's simplicity.

You can leaf through the pictures and then choose a theme which they feel best reflects their own personality. Upon plunging into the desired chapter, you'll discover that Wagstaff has demystified design to present a clear and simple way of achieving the look.

She presents the most salient characteristics of that look: the most typical colors or fabrics, the type of furniture, or the usual arrangement of details. There are no complicated terms or intimidating dos and don'ts that imply outrageous budgets or a master's degree in interior design—just practical tips patiently explained.

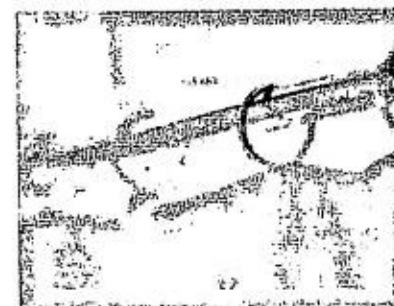
Perhaps the most wonderful thing about this book is that it doesn't assume you have to throw away everything you own. Since Wagstaff has outlined the general principles of each theme, you can decide what furniture or accessories you can still work with the look, and then scout for items that are similar to the ones she used. A lot of the materials are actually readily available in local design stores or can even be made. Perfect for people who want to decorate their homes but still have enough money left over to pay for rent.

Simple how-tos

Wagstaff includes simple how-tos



THE OLD sink unit doors are removed and a glass brick inserted in each. The sink top and the splashback are all transformed with mosaic in varying shades of blue. A mirror frame covered with pewter is added to the scheme.



LINEN café curtains are hung with brass rings on a brass rod for a smart alternative to nets. They break up the window area and provide privacy without losing any light.



A PAINTED canvas floor cloth provides a cheap way to cover a large area. Here it is painted in the same fashion as the walls and a mock mosaic pattern applied with a large flat brush.

for 80 of the accessories, furnishings and furniture found in her design examples. Each project has illustrated instructions and seems fun enough to make for its own sake (if you're the kind who likes tinkering with a glue gun or hammer). If you have no artistic inclination or hand-eye coordination, and holding a saw may prove dangerous to yourself or to others, then you can relay the information to a carpenter and let him make what would normally cost five times more in a store.

Wagstaff's projects allow you to slowly redecorate your home, piece by piece, according to the time, budget and materials at hand. This isn't just economical, but gives you the great opportunity to redecorate your home with your own hands. You can look around your room and not just see price tags and credit card debts, but loving labor and your own unique self-expression.

The only possible drawback to "Creating a Look" is a need for more examples for each look, especially since Wagstaff devotes each theme to one particular room in the house. A lot of questions arise: What do I do if I want a Mexican living room, not a Mexican kitchen? How do I apply the Greek style to the bedroom?

Given that Wagstaff has chosen to present a broad spectrum of design ideas, there will be a sacrifice in detail. If you fall in love with a particular look and want to apply it to your whole house, you might want to invest in a book devoted to explaining its design elements. But thanks to Wagstaff, you'll know what to look for. And you just might be able to afford making your theme come true.

Available at National Bookstore



SUMPTUOUS silks in the form of heavy interlined drapes sit well with simple rattan and bamboo. The screen is a simple construction using bamboo poles and fencing. The drapes and fabric-covered pelmet add dramatic elegance to the Muslim blind which is held in place by cotton ties.

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1. This promotion is open to all consumers who purchase any of the participating brands of Nestlé or Goya products from January 1 to January 31, 2001.

2. Consumers must collect and retain the wrapper of any of the participating brands of Nestlé or Goya products to be eligible for the promotion.

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PRIZES AND REGULATIONS

1. The prizes are as follows:

- 8 Philips DVD Mini Hi-Fi Players
- 20 Philips Expanium MP3 Players
- 40 Guess Gift Cards worth P4,000

2. The prizes will be awarded to the winners of the promotion.

3. The winners will be selected by a random drawing.

4. The winners will be notified by the designated person in charge of the promotion.

5. The winners will be notified by the designated person in charge of the promotion.

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